

Plain Man's Pathway
TO
HEAVEN,
WHEREIN

Every man may clearly see whether
he shall be saved or damned.

Set forth Dialogue-wise: for the
better understanding of the simple.

BY

Arthur Dent, preacher of the Word
of God at *South-Shoebury in Essex*.

Corrected and much amended; with
a Table of all the principle matters; and
three Prayes, necessary to be used in
private families, hereunto added by the
same Author.

Zephaniah 3. 5.

*Every morning the Lord trieth his judges;
he faileth not: but the
wicked will not learn to be ashamed.*

L O N D O N,

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sold by *J. W.* at the *Star and*
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*To the Right Worshipful, Sir Julius Caesar
Knight, one of the Masters of the Request to the Kings
Majesty, Judge of the High Court of Admiralty, and
Master of St. Katherines : A. D. wisheth all good
things in Christ Jesus.*

HAVING finished (Right Worshipful) and
made ready for the Presse this Dia-
logue, I bethought me (with the common man-
ner of all that write any Book in this age, is to
dedicate the same to one or other of great
place) to whom I might dedicate these my
poor Labours. At last, I did resolve with my
self, none to be more fit then your Worship,
both in regard of some affinity in the flesh, as
also because of those manifold good parts,
wherewith the Almighty hath endued you.
Having therefore none other thing to present
your Worship withal) in token of a thankfull
heart for your courtesies shewed towards me)
Behold, I do here send unto you this third fruit
of my labours published : most humbly be-
seching you to take it in good worth : not
weighing the value of the thing, (which is of
no value) but the simple and good mind and
meaning of the giver.

This work doth sharply reprove and censure
the world of sin, and therefore is like to find
many deadly enemies, which with cruel ha-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

tried will most eagerly pursue it unto death. *Zodius* also and his fellows, I know, will bitterly carp at it : therefore it flyeth unto your worship, for protection, and humbly desireth to take sanctuary under your wings. Wherefore I humbly intreat you to take upon you the Patronage and Defence of it, that by your means it may be delivered both from the calumnious Obloquies of evil disposed persons, and also from the worlds malignity, so as it may take no injury. And concerning this little Volume, the sum of the matter of it, you shall find in the *Epistle to the Reader*. As concerning the manner, here is no great matter of Learning, Wit, Art, Eloquence, or Ingenious Inventions, (for I have herein specially respected the ignorant and vulgar sort, whose edification I do chiefly aim at;) yet somewhat there is which may concern the learned and give them some contentment. Whatsoever it be, I leave it with your Worship, beseeching you to give it entertainment. And now I do most humbly take my leave, commending both your self, your good Wife and your whole Family, to the merciful protection of the ever living God.

From South-Shoobery in Essex.

April 10. An. Dom. 1601.

Your Worships to command
in the Lord,
ARTHUR DENT.

THE
EPISTLE
TO THE
READER.

GEntle Reader, seeing my little Sermon of Repentance, some few years since published, hath been so well accepted of, I have for thy further good, published this Dialogue, being the third fruit of my labour; wishing it the like success, that God thereby may have the glory, and thou who art the Reader, comfort. I have in one part of this Dialogue, produced some of the Antient Writers, and some of the wise Heathen also, to testify upon their Oath in their own language, and to bear witness of the ugliness of some Vices, which we in this age might make light of, which I wish may not be offensive to any. In other parts of this work I do in a manner relinquish them.

The Epistle to the Reader.

But in this case I have in my weake judgement thought them to bee of some good use, to shew forth thus much, That if we do not in time repent, forsake our sinnes, and seek after GOD, both the Antient Christian Fathers (whose eyes saw not that we see, nor their ears heard that we hear) yea, the very Heathen also shall rise up in judgment against us. Let none therefore stumble at it. But if any Man do, let him remember, I am in a Dialogue, not in a Sermon. I write to all of all sorts; I speak not to some few of one sort. But that which is done herein, is not much more then that of the Apostle, Acts 17.28. (as some of your own Poets have said) which is warrantable. One thing dear Christian, I pray thee, let me beg of thee; to wit, that thou wouldst not read two or three leaves of this Book, and so cast it from thee, but that thou wouldst read it throughout, even to the end: For I do assure thee, if there be any thing in it worth the reading, it is bestowed in the latter parts thereof, and most of all towards the Conclusion. Be not discouraged therefore at the harshness of the beginning; but look for smother matter in the midst, and most smooth in the perclose and wind up of all. For this Dialogue hath in it, not the nature of a Tragedy, which is begun with joy, and ended with sorrow; but a Comedy, which is begun with sorrow, and

[The Epistle to the Reader.

and ended with joy. This Book meddeth not at all with any controversies in the Church, or any thing in the state Ecclesiastical, but onely entreteth into a Controversie with Satan and Sin. The Authour of all blessing give a blessing unto it. The God of peace which brought again from the dead our Lord Iesus, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, make us perfect in all good works, sanctifie us throughout, amend all our imperfections, and keep us blameless until the day of his most glorious appearing. Amen.

Thine in the Lord,

A. D.

THE
CONTENTS
OF THIS
DIALOGUE.

First, it sheweth mans misery by nature, with the means of recovery.

Secondly, it sharply inveigheth against the iniquity of the time, and common corruptions of the world.

Thirdly, it sheweth the marks of the children of God, and of the reprobates; with the apparent signs of salvation and damnation.

Fourthly, it declareth how hard a thing it is to enter into life, and how few shall enter.

Fifthly, it layeth open the ignorance of the world, with the objections of the same.

Last of all, it publisheth and proclaimeth the sweet promises of the Gospel, with the abundant mercies of God to all that repent, beleeve, and turn truly unto him.

The

The Plain-man's path way to HEAVEN.

Interlo- } *Theologus*, a Divine.
cutors. } *Philagathus*, an honest man.
 } *Asanctus*, an ignorant man,
 } *Antiligon*, a Caviller.

Phil. **W**ell met, good *Mr. Theologus*.
Theol. What mine old friend
Philagathus ! I am glad to see you in good
health.

Phil. *Are you walking, Sir, here all alone in
this pleasant Meadow ?*

Theol. Yea, for that I take some pleasure
at this time of the year, to walk abroad in
the fields for my recreation, both to take the
fresh air, and to hear the sweet singing of
birds.

Phil. *Indeed Sir it is very comfortable, espe-
cially now in this pleasant moneth of May, and
thanks be to God, hitherto we have had a very
forward spring, and as kindly a season as came
this seven year.*

Theol. God doth abound towards us in
mercies : O that we could abound towards
him in thanksgiving.

Phil. *I pray you Sir, what a clock hold you it ?*

Theol. I take it to be a little past One; for

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I came but even now from dinner.

Phil. But behold; yonder come two men towards us; what be they, I pray you?

Theol. They be a couple of neighbours of the next Parish: the one of them is called *Asunctus*, who in very deed is a very ignorant man in Gods matters, and the other is called *Antilegon*, a notable Atheist, and caviller against all goodness.

Phil. If they be such, it were good for us to take some occasion to speak of matters of Religion: it may be we shall do them some good.

Theol. You have made a good motion; I like it well. If therefore you will minister some matter and move some questions, I will be ready to answer in the best sort I can.

Phil. But stay Sir, lo here they come upon us.

Theol. Welcome, good neighbours, welcome. How do you, *Asunctus*, and you *Antilegon*?

Asun. Well God be thanked: and we are glad to see your Mastership in good health.

Theol. What make both of you here at this time of the day? There is some occasion, I am sure, draweth you this way.

Asun. Indeed Sir, we have some little business; for we came to talk with one of your Parish about a Cow we should buy of him.

Theol. Hath my neighbour a Cow to sell?

Antil. We are told he hath a very good one to sell;

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sell ; but I am afraid at this time of the year we shall find dear ware of her.

Theol. How dear ? What do you think a very good Cow may be worth ?

Antil. A good Cow indeed at this time of the year is worth very near four pound, which is a great price.

Theol. It is a very great price indeed.

Phil. I pray you, M. Theologus, leave off this talking of kine, and worly matters, and let us enter into some speech of matters of Religion, whereby we may do good, and take good one of another.

Theol. You say well. But it may bee these mens business requirs hast, so as they cannot stay.

Asun. No Sir, we are in no great hast ; we can stay two or three hours for the days are long, if we dispatch our business by night, it will serve our turn well enough.

Theol. Then if it will please you to walk to yonder Oak-tree, there is a goodly Arbor, and handsome seats, where we may all sit in shadow, and confer of heavenly matters.

Asun. With a good will, sir.

Phil. Come then, let us go.

Asun. This is a goodly Arbour indeed, and here be handsome seats.

Theol. Sit you all down, I pray you. Now friend *Philagathus* if you have any questions to move of matters of Religion, we are all ready to hear you.

Phil.

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Phil. It may be these men are somewhat ignorant of the very principles of Religion, and therefore I think it not amiss to begin there, and so to make way for further matters.

Theol. I pray you do so then.

Phil. First then, I demand of you in what state all men are born by nature.

Theol. In the state of condemnation; as appears, Eph. 2. 3. We are by nature the children of wrath as well as others. And again it is written, Behold, I was born in iniquity, and in sin hath my mother conceived me, Psal. 51. 5.

Phil. It is every mans case? Are not Dukes and Nobles, Lords and Ladies, and great Potentates of the earth, exempted from it?

Theol. No surely: it is the common case of all, both high and low, rich and poor; as it is written, What is man, that he should be clean, and he that is born of a woman, that he should be just?

Phil. From whence cometh it, that all men are born in so woful case?

Theol. From the fall of Adam, who thereby hath not only wrapt himself, but all his posterity in extream, and unspeakable misery, as the Apostle saith, By one mans disobedience, many were made sinners. And, By the offence of one, the fault came upon all men to condemnation, Rom. 5. 1.

Phil. What reason is there that we all should thus

thus be punished for another mans offence?

Theol. Because we were then all in him, and are now all of him : that is, we are so descended out of his loyns, that of him we have not only received our natural and corrupt bodies, but also by propagation have inherited his foul corruptions, as it were by hereditary right.

Phil. But for as much as some have dreamed that Adam by his fall hurt himself onely, and not his posterity ; and that we have his corruption derived unto us by imitation, and not by propagation : therefore I pray you shew this more plainly.

Theol. Even as great personages by committing of treason, do not onely hurt themselves, but also stain their blood, and disgrace their posterity (for the children of such Nobles are dis-inherited, whose blood is attainted, till they be restored again by act of Parliament :) even so our blood being attainted by *Adams* transgression, we can inherit nothing of right, till we be restored by Christ.

phil. Doth this hereditary infection and contagion over spread our whole nature ?

Theol. Yes truly, it is universal, extending it self throughout the whole man, both soul and body, both reason, understanding, will, and affections ; for the Scriptures avouch, that we are dead in sins and trespasses. *Eph. 2. 1. Col. 1. 2. and 3. 2.*

Phil.

Phil. How understand you that ?

Theol. Not of the deadness of the body, or the natural faculties of the soul, but of the spiritual faculties.

Phil. Did Adam then lose his nature, and destroy it by his fall ?

Theol. Not so: our Nature was corrupted thereby, but not destroyed; for still there remaineth in our Nature, Reason, Understanding Will, and Affections, and we are not as a block or a stock, but by *Adams* disobedience we are blemished, maimed, and spoiled of all ability to understand aright, or to will and do aright; as it is written, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. *We are not sufficient of our selves; but our sufficiency is of God.* And again, *It is God which worketh in you, both the will and the deed, even of his good pleasure,* *Phil.* 2. 13. And as concerning the other point, *St. James* saith, *That all men are made after the similitude of God:* *Jam.* 3. 9. Meaning thereby, that there remain some reliques and parts of Gods Image even in the most wicked men; as Reason, Understanding, &c. so that our nature was not wholly destroyed.

Phil. Then you think there be some sparks and remnants left in us still of that excellent image of
God

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God which was in our first creation.

Theol. I think so indeed ; and it may plainly appear unto us in the wise speeches and writings of Heathen Poets and Philosophers : in all which we may, as by certain ruines ; perceive what was the excellent frame and building of mans creation.

Phil. Can a man please God in any thing which he doth, so long as he continueth in the state of nature.

Theol. No, not in any thing : for till we be in the state of grace, even our best actions are sinful, as Preaching, Prayer, Almshouses, &c. as it is written : *Who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean ?* Job 14. 4. The Apostle also saith, *They that are in the flesh, cannot please God.* Rom 8. 8. that is, such as are still in their natural corruption. And our Lord Jesus himself saith, *Do men gather Grapes of thorns, or Figs of Thistles ?* Mat. 7. 16. meaning thereby that meer natural men can bring forth no fruits acceptable to God.

Phil. This is a very harsh and hard saying. I pray you for my further instruction make it more plain.

Theol. Men in the state of nature may do those things which of themselves are good ; but they do utterly fail in the manner of doing them ;

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them ; they do them not as they should be done : that is, in faith, love, zeal, conscience of obedience, &c. Neither yet with any chearfulness, delight or feeling ; but even as it were forcing themselves to do the outward actions. Thus did *Cain* sacrifice, the *Pharisees* pray, *Annanias* and *Saphira* give alms, and the *Jews* offer up their oblations and burnt offerings.

phil. Have men any true sight, or lively and sound feeling of this misery, and woful estate, so long as they be meerly natural ?

Theol. No surely, but are a'together blinded and hardned in it, being nothing desirous to come out of it, but do greatly please themselves in it, and can hardly be perswaded that they are in any such woeful case : as appeareth plainly in the example of that Ruler, who being commanded, or rather required of our Saviour Christ to keep the Commandments, answered, *All these have I kept from my youth*; Luke 8. 21. And again, although the Church of *Laodicea*, was wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, yet she thought her self rich, encreased with goods, and wanting nothing. It followeth then, that so long as men are in the state of nature, they have no true sight and feeling of their miseries.

phil. Do you think, that all men, being meerly
natural,

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natural, are under the curse of the Law?

Theol. Yes certainly : and not onely so, but also under the very tyranny and dominion of Satan, though they know it not, feel it not, see it not, or perceive it not : for all that are not in Christ, are under the curse of the Law, and the power of Darknes, and the Devil : as appeareth, *Ephes. 2. 2.* where the Devil is called the prince that ruleth in the Air, even the spirit that now worketh in the Children of disobedience. *2 Cor. 4. 4.* In another place he is called the God of this world, who blindeth the eyes of all unbelievers. And again it is said, That all men naturally are in his snare, being taken captive of him at his will.

phil. Few will be perswaded of that ; they will say, they defie the Devil, and thank God they were never troubled with him.

Theol. Their hot words do nothing amend the matter ; for the Devil is no more driven away with words, then with holy water ; but he sitteth in the tongues and mouths, nay, possesseth the very hearts and entrails of thousands, which say, They defie him, and are not troubled with him ; as appeareth manifestly by their particular actions, and the whole course of their life.

phil. Methinks if the Devil do so inwardly possess

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possess the hearts and consciences of men, they should have some sight and feeling of it.

Theol. The working of the Devil in mens souls (being an invisible Spirit) is with such unconceivable sleight and crafty conveyance, that men in the state of nature, cannot possibly feel it or perceive it : for how can a blind man see, or a dead man feel ?

Phil. *Shew this more plainly.*

Theol. Even as a crafty Juggler doth so prestigate and blind mens outward senses by the delusions of Satan, that they think they see that which they see not, and feel that which they feel not : even so the Devil doth so delude and bewitch our inward senses, and the natural faculties of our souls, that we having a mist cast before our eyes, think we are that which we are not, see that which we see not, and feel that which we feel not. For the deep cunning of Satan lieth in this, that he can give us our deaths wound, and we shall never know who hurt us.

Phil. *Few will believe this to be true.*

Theol. True indeed : for few will believe the Scriptures ; few will believe this, because few feel it. Where it is not felt, it can hardly be believed. Onely the Elect do feel it, and there ore onely the Elect do believe it. As for all others, they are the very
Pren-

tices and Bond slaves of the Devil, which is a thousand times worse then to be a Gally-slave.

phil. *How long do men continue in this woful state of nature, being under the curse of the Law, and the very slavery of Satan and sin?*

Theol. Till they be regenerate and born again, and so brought into the state of grace; as our Lord Jesus saith, *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.* John 3. 3.

phil. *Do not many dye, and depart this life before they be born again, and consequently, before they be brought into the state of grace?*

Theol. Yes, no doubt, thousands: for many live forty or threescore years in this world, and in the end dye, and go out of this life, before they know wherefore they came into it; as it is written, *My people perish for want of knowledge,* Hos. 4. 6.

phil. *What may we think of such?*

Theol. I quake to speak what I think: for surely I do not see how such can be saved. I speak not of Infants and Children, whereof some, no doubt, are saved by vertue of the promise and covenant, through the election of grace.

Phil. *It seemeth then that you think none can be saved, but those onely which are born again.*

Theol.

Theol. I think so indeed.

phil. I pray you tell me what the same regeneration and new birth is, whereof you speak

Theol. It is a renewing and repairing of the corrupted and decayed estate of our souls: as it is written, *Be ye changed by the renewing of your mind*, Rom. 12. And again, *Be renewed in the spirit of your mind*, Eph. 4. 2, 3.

phil. Explain this more fully.

Theol. Even as the wild Olive retaineth his old nature, till it be grafted into the sweet Olive, but afterwards is partaker of a new nature; so we, till we be grafted into Christ, retain our old nature, but afterward are turned into a new creature: as it is written, *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*, 2 Cor. 5. 17.

phil. I understand not what you say.

Theol. You must know this, that as there is a natural birth of the whole man; so there is also a spiritual birth of the whole man.

Phil. How is that?

Theol. When as the natural faculties of the soul, as reason, understanding, will and affections, and the members of the body also are so sanctified, purged & rectified by grace, that we understand, will, and desire that which is good.

Phil. Cannot a man will and desire that which is good before he be born again?

Theol. No more then a dead man can desire the

the good things of this Life. For mans will is not free to consent unto good, till it be enlarged by grace, and an unregenerated man doth sin necessarily, though not by constraint. For mans will is free from constraint, (or it sinneth of it self) but not from thra'dome unto sin.

Phil. You speak as if a man could do no other thing but sin till the new work be wrought in him.

Theol. That is mine opinion indeed. For a man and his flesh are all one, till he be regenerate; they agree together like man and wife, they joyn together in all evil, they live and dye together: for when the flesh perisheth, the man perisheth.

Phil. Is not this regeneration a changing, or rather destroying of humane nature?

Theol. Nothing less: it is neither an abolishing, nor changing of the substance of body or soul, or any of the faculties thereof, but onely a rectifying and repairing of them, by removing the corruption.

Phil. Is then our natural corruption so purged and quite removed by the power of grace, that it remaineth not at all in us, but that we are wholly freed of it?

Theol. Not so: for the reliques, and remnants of our old nature, which the Scripture calleth

calleth the old man, do hang about us, and dwell in us, even until our dying day ; as it is plainly proved in the ten last verses of the 7th. to the Romans.

Phil. Then you affirm, that this new man, or new work of grace and regeneration, is imperfect in this life.

Theol. Yea, for the new creature or new work of grace can never be fully fashioned in this life, but is always in fashioning. And as our faith and knowledge in this life are imperfect, so is our regeneration and sanctification.

Phil. You said before, that the regeneration or new birth, is of the whole man : which speech seemeth to imply, that the new work of grace is entire and perfect.

Theol. You mistake the matter : For although the new birth is universal, and of the whole man ; yet it is not entire, perfect, pure, and without mixture of corruption : for it is written, *The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.* The Apostle also prayeth that the *Thessalonians* may be sanctified throughout, in spirit, soul, and body.

phil. This seemeth very obscure ; I pray you make it more plain.

Theol. You must note this, that the new work and the old, flesh and spirit, grace and

cor-

corruption, are so intermingledly joyned together in all the faculties of the soul and body, as that the one doth ever fight against the other.

Phil. But tell me, I pray you, how you understand this intermingling of grace and corruption in the soul. Do you mean that grace is placed in one part of the soul, and corruption in another, so as they be sundred in place.

Theol. No, that is not my meaning : but this, that they be joyned and mingled together (as I said) in and throughout the whole man. For the mind or understanding part, is not one part flesh, and another part spirit ; but the whole mind is flesh, and the whole mind is spirit, partly one, and partly another. The same is to be said of will and affections.

Phil. I pray you express it more plainly.

Theol. Even as the air in the dawning, the day is not wholly light, or wholly dark, as at mid-night, or at noon-day ; neither is it in one part light, and in another part dark, but the whole air is partly light and partly dark throughout : and as in a vessel of luke-warm water, the water it self is not onely hot nor onely cold, but heat and cold are mixed together in every part of the water, so is the flesh and the spirit mingled together in the soul of man. And this is the cause why these two contrary qualities fight together.

phil.

Phil. Out of doubt this Doctrine of regeneration is a very great mystery.

Theol. Yes certainly, it is a secret of secrets, which the wise of this world cannot comprehend.

Phil. Some think that courtesty, kindness, good nurture, good nature, and good education, are regeneration; and that courteous and good natured men, must needs be saved.

Theol. They are generally deceived: for these things do not necessarily accompany salvation, but are to be found in such as are altogether prophane and irreligious: yet we are to love such good outward qualities, and the men in whom we find them.

Phil. What say you then to learning, wit and policy? Are not these things of the essence of Religion, and prove a regeneration?

Theol. No, no: for they be external gifts which may be in the most wicked men; as in Papists, Heathen Poets, and Philosophers, yet we are greatly to reverence learned and wise men, although the new and inward work be not as yet wrought: for that is onely of God that is from above.

Phil. The common people do attribute much to learning and policy; for they will say, Such a man is learned and wise, and knoweth the Scriptures as well as any of them, and yet he doth not them and thus.

Theol.

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Theol. It is one thing to know the History and Letter of the Scripture, and another thing to believe and feel the power thereof in the heart, which is onely from the sanctifying spirit which none of the wise of this world can have.

Phil. It is a common opinion that if a man hold the truth in judgement, be no Papist or Heretick, but leadeth an honest civil life, then he must of necessity be saved.

Theol. That followeth not: for many come so far, which yet notwithstanding have not the inward touch.

Phil. That seemeth strange. For many will say, As long as they be neither whore nor thief, nor spotted with such like gross sins, they trust in God they shall be saved.

Theol. They err, not knowing the Scriptures. For many thousands are in great danger of losing their souls for ever, which are free from such notorious and horrible vices: nay, many which in the world are counted good honest men, good true dealers, good neighbours, and good townsmen.

Asun. I pray you, sir, give me leave a little. I have heard all your speech hitherto and I like reasonable well of it; but now I can forbear no longer, my conscience urgeth me to speak: For methinks you go too far, you go beyond your learning in this that you condemn good neighbours and

townsmen. You say, *Many such men are in danger of losing their souls; but I will never believe it while I live: For if such men be not saved, I cannot tell who shall.*

Theol. But you must learn to know out of the Scriptures, that all outward honesty and righteousness, without the true knowledge and inward feeling of God, availeth not to eternal life: As our Saviour Christ saith, *Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Mat. 5. 20. It is also written, that when *Paul* preached at *Berea*, many honest men and women did believe: *Acts* 17. 13. that is, such as were outwardly honest, or honest to the world only: for they could not be truly and inwardly honest before they did believe. Therefore you see that this outward honesty and civility, without the regeneration of the spirit, availeth not to eternal life: and then consequently, all your honest worldly men are in great danger of losing their souls for ever.

Asun. What sound reason can you yield, why such honest men should be condemned.

Theol. Because many such are utterly void of all true knowledge of God and his Word. Nay, which is more, many of them despise the Word of God, and hate all the zealous Professors of it. They esteem Preachers but as prattlers.

Pratlers, and Sermons as good as Tales; they esteem a Preacher no more then a Shoemaker, they regard the Scripture no more then their old Shooes. What hope is there then I pray you, that such men should be saved? Doth not the Holy Ghost say, *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?*

Asun. You go too far, you judg too hardly of them.

Theol. Not a whit. For all experience sheweth, that they mind, dream and dote of nothing else day and night, but this world, lands and leases, grounds and livings, kine and sheep, and how to wax rich. All their thoughts, words and works, are of these and such like things. And their actions do most manifestly declare, that they are of the earth; and speak of the earth, and there is nothing in them but earth, earth. As for Sermons, they care not how few they hear. And for the Scriptures, they regard them not, they read them not, they esteem them not worth the while, there is nothing more irksome unto them; they had rather pull straws, or do any thing, then hear, read, or confer of the Scriptures. And, as the Prophet saith, *The Word of the Lord is as a reproach unto men, they have no delight in it,* Jer. 6. 10.

Phil. I marvel much, that such men should live so honestly to the world-ward.

Theol. No marvel at all: For many bad men, whose hearts are worm-eaten within: Yet for some outward and carnal respects, do abstain from the gross act of sin: As some for credit, some for shame, some for fear of Law, some for fear of punishment; but none for love of God, for zeal of Conscience, or of Obedience. For it is a sure thing, that the wicked may have that spirit which doth repress, but not that which doth renew.

Phil. It seemeth then by your speeches, that some which are not regenerate, do in some things excel like Children of God.

Theol. Most certain it is, that some of them in outward gifts, and the outward carriage of themselves do go beyond some of the Elect.

Phil. Shew me, I pray you, in what gifts?

Theol. In learning, discretion, justice, temperance, prudence, patience, liberality, affability, kindness, courtesie, good nature, &c.

Phil. Afterbinks it should not be possible.

Theol. Yestruely: For some of Gods dear Children in whom no doubt the inward work is truly and soundly wrought, yet are so troubled and incumbered with a crabbed and crooked nature, and so clogged with some master sin; as some with anger, some with pride, some with covetousness, some with lusts, some one way and some another; all which breaking out in them, do so blemish them

them and their profession, that they cannot so shine forth unto men, as otherwise no doubt they would: And this is their wound, their grief, and their heart-smart, and that which costeth them many a tear, and many a prayer; and yet can they not get the full victory over them, but still they are left in them, as a prick in the flesh to humble them.

Phil. Yet love should cover a multitude of such infirmities in Gods Children.

Theol. It should do so indeed: But there is great want of love, even in the best: And the worst sort espying these infirmities in the godly, run upon them with open mouth, and take upon them to condemn them utterly, and to judg their hearts, saying; They be hypocrites, dissemblers, and there is none worse then they.

Phil. But do you not think that there be some counterfeits even amongst the greatest professors.

Theol. Yes, no doubt, there be and always have been some very Hypocrites in the Church, but we must take heed of judging and condemning all for some. For it were very much to condemn Christ and his eleven Disciples because of one Judas; or the whole Primitive Church, for one Ananias and Saphira.

Phil. But I hope you are of this mind, that some regenerate men, even in outward gifts, and their outward carriage, are comparable with many others.

The Plain Man's

Theol. Questionless very many. For they being guided by Gods Spirit, and upheld by his Grace, do walk very uprightly and unblamably towards men.

Phil. Yet there rested one scruple: For it seemeth very strange unto me, that men of so discreet carriage as you speak of, and of so many good parts, should not be saved. It is great pity such men should be damned.

Theol. It seemeth so unto us indeed; but God is only wise. And you must note, that as there be some infirmities in Gods Children, which he correcteth with temporal chastisements, and yet rewardeth their faith, love, and inward service and obedience with eternal life: So there be some good things in the wicked, and them that are without Christ, which God rewardeth with temporal blessings, and yet punisheth them eternally for their unbelief and hardness of heart.

Phil. Now you have reasonably well satisfied me touching the Doctrine of Regeneration, and the manifold errors and deceits that are in it, and of it. I pray you let us now proceed: and first of all tell me by what means the new birth is wrought.

Theol. By the Preaching of the Word, as the outward means; and the secret work of the Spirit as the inward means, 1 Per. 1, 2, 3.

John 15. Acts 10. 44. Ephes. 4. 3.

Phil. Many hear the Word preached and are nothing

nothing the better, but rather the worse: What, I pray you is the cause of that?

Theol. Mens own incredulity and hardness of heart, because God in his wrath leaveth them to themselves, and depriveth them of his Spirit, without the which all preaching is vain. For except the Spirit do follow the Words into our hearts, we can find no joy, taste nor comfort therein.

Phil. *Cannot a man attain unto regeneration and the new birth, without the word and the spirit.*

Theol. No verily. For they are the instruments and means whereby God doth work it.

Antil. *Why may not a man have as good a faith to Godward that heareth no Sermons, as he that heareth all the Sermons in the World?*

Theol. Why may not he that eateth no meat, be as fat and as well-liking, as he that eateth all the meat in the world? For is not the preaching of the Word the food of our souls?

Antil. *I like not so much hearing of Sermons, and reading of the Scriptures, except men could keep them better.*

Theol. Faithful and honest hearts do therefore hear, that they may be more able to observe and do; for a man cannot do the will of God before he know it, and he cannot know it without hearing and reading.

Antil. *I marvel what good men do get by gadding to Sermons, and poring so much into the*

Scripture, or what are they better then others? There are none more full of envy and malice then they: They will do their Neighbour a shrewd turn as soon as any body; and therefore in mine opinion, they be but a company of hypocrites and precise fools.

Theol. You judge uncharitably. Full little do you know what they feel, or what good Gods people get by hearing of the Word. For the work of the Spirit in the hearts of the Elect is very secret and altogether hid from the world: As it is written, *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whether it goeth, or whence it cometh: so is every man that is born of the Spirit.* And again, *The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.*

Anti. Tush tush what needs all this ado? If a man say his Lords Prayer, his Ten Commandments, and his Belief, and keep them, and say no body harm, nor do no body harm, and do as he would be done to, have a good faith to God-ward, and be a man of Gods belief, no doubt he shall be saved without all this running to Sermons, and prattling of the Scripture.

Theol. Now you pour it out indeed: You think you have spoken wisely. But, alas! you have bewrayed your great ignorance; for you imagine a man may be saved without the Word, which is a gross error.

Anti.

Antil. It is no matter; say you what you will, and all the Preachers in the world besides, as long as I serve God, and say my prayers duly and truly, morning and evening, and have a good faith in God, and put my whole trust in him, and do my true intent, and have a good mind to God-ward, and a good meaning, although I am not learned, yet I hope it will serve the turn for my souls health. For that God which made me, must save me. It is not you that can save me, for all your learning, and all your Scriptures.

Treol. You may very fitly be compared to a sick man, who having his brain distempered with heat raveth and speaketh idly, he cannot tell what. For the Holy Ghost saith, *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer shall be abominable*, Prov. 28.9. And again, *He that despiseth the Word, shall be destroyed*, Prov. 13.13. So long therefore as you despise Gods Word, and turn away your ear from hearing his Gospel preached, all your prayers, your fantastical serving of God, your good meanings, and your good intents are to no purpose; but most odious and loathsome in the sight of God: As it is written, *My soul hateth your new moons, and your appointed feasts; they are a burthen unto me, I am weary to bear them. When you stretch out your hands, I will blaine my eyes from you, & although you make many prayers, I wil not hear: for your hands are full of blood.*

And again, the Lord saith by the same Prophet, *He that killeth a bullock, is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a sheep, as if he cut off a dogs neck; he that offered an oblation, as if he offered swines blood: He that burneth incense, as if he blessed an Idol, Isa. 66. 3.* Where you see the Lord telleth you his mind touching these matters; to wit, that all your Prayers, Services, good Meanings, &c. are abominable unto him, so long as you walk in ignorance, profaneness, disobedience, and contempt of the Gospel: For he saith in the words immediately going before, *To him will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.*

Asun. I grant indeed, for them that are idle, and have little to do, it is not amiss now and then to hear a Sermon, and read the Scriptures: but we have no leisure, we must follow our business, we cannot live by the Scriptures; they are not for plain folk, they are too high for us, we will not meddle with them. They belong to Preachers and Ministers.

Theol. Christ saith, *My sheep hear my voice, and I give unto them eternal life, John 10.* If therefore you refuse to hear the voice of Christ, you are none of his sheep, neither can you have eternal life. And in another place our Lord Jesus saith, *He that is of God, heareth Gods word. He therefore hear is not, because*
ye

ye are not of God, John 8.47. St. Paul writing to all sorts of men, both rich and poor, high and low, men and women, young and old, exhorteth, That the Word of Christ may dwell plentifully in them all, in all wisdom, Col. 3.16. You see therefore that the Apostle would have all sorts of people that have souls to save, to be well acquainted with the Scriptures. Therefore you may as well say you will not meddle with God, with Christ, nor everlasting Life, as to say you will not meddle with the Scriptures.

Asun. Well, I cannot read, and therefore I cannot tell what Christ, or what St. Paul may say; but this I am sure of, that God is a good man (worshipped might he be) he is merciful, and that we must be saved by our good prayers, and good serving of God.

Throl. You speak foolishly and ignorantly in all that you say, having no ground for any thing you speak, but your own fancy, and your own conceit: And yet you will believe your own fancy against all Preachers, and against all that can be spoken out of the Word. But I pray you give me leave a little: If a man dream that he shall be a King, and in the morning when he is awake, perswadeth himself it shall be so, may he not be justly laughed at as having no ground for it? Even so may all they which believe their own dreams and fantasies touch.

touching salvation. But it is true which *Solomon* saith, *A fool believeth every thing*: That Copper is Gold, and a Counter an Angel. And assuredly great reason there is, that he which will not believe God, should be given over to believe the devi, his dream, and his fancy.

Asun. *I pray you instruct me better then.*

Theol. You had need indeed to be better instructed; for the Devil hath slyly deluded your soul, and cast a mist before your eyes, making you believe the Crow is white, and that your estate is good before God, whereas indeed it is woful and miserable.

Asun. *I despise the Devil with all my heart. But, I pray you, tell me how it comes to pass that I am thus deceived?*

Theol. This is that deceiveth you and many others: That you measure your selves by your selves and by others, which is a false metwand. For you seem to lie straight, so long as you are measured by your selves and by others, but lay the rule of Gods VVord unto you, and then you lie altogether crooked.

Asun. *What other thing is there that deceiveth me?*

Theol. Another thing that deceiveth you is your own heart: For you know not your own heart, but are altogether deceived therein: *For the heart is deceivable above all things.* He is a wise man, and greatly enlightned, that know-

knoweth his own heart. But you are b'ind, and know not what is within you; but dimly imagine you shall be saved, and hope you know not what, of eternal life. And because blindness maketh you bold, you will seem to be resolute in words, and say, It is pittie he should live which doth any whit doubt of his Salvation. And assuredly you speak as you think and as you know. For ought that you know to the contrary, it seemeth so: Though indeed and in truth it is not so: For you are deluded with a false light. And sometimes no doubt you have pricks, gripes, terrors and inward accusations of conscience for all your bold and resolute speeches.

Asun. Truly I never heard so much before-

Theol. That is because you shut your eyes, and stop your ears against God, and all goodness. You are like the deaf Adder, which heareth not the voice of the Charmer, though he be most expert in Charming.

Asun. Well then, if it be so, I would be glad, now to learn, if you would teach me. And as you have shewed me the means whereby the true birth is wrought, so now shew me the certain signs and tokens thereof, whereby all men may certainly know that they are sanctified, regenerate, and shall be saved.

Theol. There be eight infallible notes and tokens of a Regenerate mind, which may well

well be termed the eight signs of salvation; and they are these.

A love to the Children of God.

A delight in his Word.

Often and fervent prayer.

Zeal of Gods glory.

Denial of our selves.

Eight infallible signs of salvation.

Patient bearing of the Cross, with profit and comfort.

Faithfulness in our calling.

Honest, just and conscionable dealing in all our actions amongst men.

Phil. Now that you shewed us the evident signs of mans salvation, shew us also the signs of condemnation.

Theol. The contraries unto these are manifest signs of damnation.

No love to the Children of God.

No delight in his Word.

Seldome and cold prayers.

Coldness in Gods matters.

Trusting to our selves.

Eight manifest signs of damnation.

Impatience under the cross.

Unfaithfulness in our calling.

Unhonest and unconscionable dealing.

phil. No doubt, if a man be infected with these, they be shewd signs that a man is extremely soul-sick, and in a very dangerous case. But are there none yet more eviens and apparent signs of condemnation then these?

Theol.

Theol. Yes verily. There be nine very clear and manifest signs of a mans condemnation.

Phil. *I pray you let me hear what they be.*

Theol. Pride.

Whoredom.

Covetousness.

Comtempt of the Gospel.

Swearing.

Lying.

Drunkennes.

Idleness.

Oppression.

*Nine manifest
signes of con-
demnation.*

Phil. *These be gross things indeed.*

Theol. They may not unfitly be termed the nine *Belzebubs* of the world ; and he that hath these signs upon him, is in a most woful case.

Phil. *What if a man be infected with some two or three of these ?*

Theol. Whosoever is infected with three of them, is in great danger of losing his soul. For all these be dead'y venome and rank poyson to the soul ; and either the three first, or the three last, or the middle three, are enough to poyson the soul, and sting it to death. Nay, to say the truth, a man were as good gripe a toad, and handle a snake, as meddle with any one of these.

Phil. *Is every one of them so dangerous ?*

Theol. Questionless : For they be the ve-

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very plague-fores of the soul. If any man have a plague sore upon his body, we use to say Gods tokens are upon him, Lord have mercy on him: So we may truly say, If any man be thoroughly and totally infected at the heart with any one of these, Gods tokens are upon his sou', Lord have mercy upon him.

Phil. *Many do not think these to be such dangerous matters as ^{you} make them, and many there be which make light of them.*

Ticol. True indeed: For the most part of men are altogether shut up in blindness and hardness of heart, having neither sight nor feeling of their sins, and therefore make light of them, thinking there is no such danger.

Phil. *It is most certain, that men are given to lessen and extenuate their sin: Or else to hide them, and daub them over with many cunning shifts and vain excuses. For men are ever ready to take covert, and will writhe and wretch (like snakes) to hide their sins: Yea, if it were possible to make sin no sin, to make virtue vice, and vice virtue. Therefore I pray you lay open unto me out of the Scriptures, the grievousness and ugliness of their sins.*

Ticol. The stinking filthiness of these sins, is so great and horrible, that no tongue or pen of man is sufficient fully to manifest and lay open the same, according to the proper nature and being thereof: Yet notwithstanding,

I will do my endeavour to lay them open in some measure, that all men may the more loath them.

Phil. I pray you then, first of all begin with pride.

Theol. You say well ; for that indeed may well stand in the fore-front : sith it is a master-devil, and the master-pock of the soul.

Phil. Shew me out of the Scriptures, that pride is so grievous and loathsome.

Theol. Solomon saith, Every one that is proud in heart, is an abomination to the Lord. Prov. 16 5. Which plainly sheweth, that God doth detest and abhor proud men. And is it not a fearful thing, think you, to be abhorred of God ? And in the same chapter, Verse 18. he saith, *Pride goeth before destruction, and an high mind before a fall* : wherein he sheweth, that pride is the fore-runner of some deadly downfall, either by disgracing, or displacing. For it is an old and true Proverb, *Pride will have a fall*.

And oftentimes, when men are most lifted up, then are they nearest unto it : as the examples of *Haman Nebuchadnezzar and Herod*, do plainly declare, when the milt swelleth, the rest of the body pineth away ; even so when the heart is puffed up with pride, the whole man is in danger of destruction. Moreover, the Holy Ghost saith, *The Lord will destroy the house of the proud. The spark of his*

his fire shall not shine; fear shall dwell in his house, and brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation, Job 18. 5. 15. And in another place he saith, The fire which is not blown shall devour him, Job 20. 26. Methinks therefore if there were any spark of grace in us these terrible speeches of the Holy Ghost might serve to humble us, and pull down our pride, especially, since the Scriptures do affirm that God resisteth the proud, and setteth himself *ex professo* against them, and therefore we unto them; for if God take against a man, who can reclaim him? for he doth whatsoever he will.

Phil. But tell me I pray you, when you speak against pride, what pride is that you mean.

Theol. I mean all pride, both that which is inward in the heart, and that also which breaketh out in mens fore-heads: I mean that which apparently sheweth it self in mens words and works.

Phil. Do you mean also pride of mens gifts.

Theol. Yes surely: for there is no pride worse or more dangerous then that. Beware saith one, of spiritual pride: as to be proud of our learning, wit, knowledge, reading writings, sermons, prayers, godliness, policy, Valour, strength, riches, honour, birth, beauty, authority. For God hath not given such gifts unto men, to the end they should make

make sale-ware of them, and set them a sun-
shining to behold ; seeking only themselves
with their gifts , the vain praise of the multi-
tude, and applause of the people, so robbing
God of his honour , and proudly arrogating
to themselves, that which is due unto God,
which is the praise of his gifts ; but he hath
given his gifts to another end, namely, that
we should use them to his glory, and the good
of others, (either in Church or Common-
wealth) especially of those which do most
concern us.

*Phil. Yet we see commonly men of greatest gifts
are most proud.*

Theol. True indeed ; for the finest cloth is
soonest stained. And as worms ingender
sooner in soft and tender wood, then in that
which is more hard and knotty ; and as moths
do breed sooner in fine wool , then in coarse
flocks : even so pride and vain glory do soon-
er assault an excellent and rare man in all kind
of knowledge and vertue, then another of
meaner gifts : and therefore pride is said to
spring out of the ashes of all Vertues. For
men will be proud , because they are wise,
learned, godly, patient, humble, &c.

*Phil. Commonly we are the worse for Gods
gifts, because we have not the right use of them ;
and again, because they engender so much proud
flesh in us, that we had need daily to be corried.*

Therefore

Therefore God sheweth great favour and mercy to that man, whom he humbleth and taketh down by any afflictions or infirmities whatsoever. For otherwise, it is sure, proud flesh would altogether overgrow us.

Theol. You have spoken the truth: for the Apostle himself confesseth that he was tempted and troubled this way, and had like to have been puffed up out of measure with the abundance of his revelations but that God in great mercy sent him a cooler and a rebater, to wit, a prick in the flesh (which he calleth the messenger of Satan) whereby the Lord cured him of his pride. 2 Cor. 12. And even so doth he cure many of us of our pride, by throwing us to Sathan, leaving us to our selves, and giving us over to commit some gross evil, even to fall down and break our necks, and all to the end he may humble us, tame us, and pull down our pride, which he seeth we are heart-sick of. It is good for us therefore to be humbled in the abundance of grace, that we be not proud of that which we have, or that which we have done. For humility in sin, is better then pride in well doing.

Phil. Herein surely appeareth the great wisdom and mercy of God: that he so graciously bringeth good out of evil, and turneth our afflictions, infirmities, falls and down-falls, to his glory, and our good.

Theol.

Theol. It is most true. For even as of the flesh of a Viper is a most sovereign Medicine to cure those which are stung of a Viper ; and as Physicians expell poyson with poyson : so God according to his marvellous wisdom, doth, of the infirmities which remain in us after Regeneration, cure other more dangerous diseases ; as pride , vain-glory and presumption. O blessed therefore be his Name for ever , which thus mercifully causeth all things to work together for the good of his own people ; of whom these things are especially to be understood.

Phil. Is there no cause why men of great gifts should glory in their gifts ?

Theol. No surely none at all. For the Apostle saith, *Who separate thee ? And what hast thou that thou hast not received ? If thou hast received it, why boastest thou, as though thou hadst not received ?* 1 Cor. 4. Where the Apostle plainly sheweth, that no man is to be proud of his gifts, because they are none of his own ; he hath but received them to use. We count him worthy to be laughed at as a fool, who having borrowed brave Apparel of others (as a silken Gown, a fatten Doublet, a chain of Gold, Velvet Breeches, &c.) should proudly jet in the streets in them, as if they were his own: even so are they worthy to be chronicled for fools,

fools, which are proud of good gifts, which are none of their own. Therefore the Prophet *Je-emiah* saith, Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the strong man in his strength, neither the rich man in his riches : but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, Jer. 9. 23. To this point also well saith the Hea-then Poet, Theocritus. No man can escape the punishment of pride : therefore in greatest prosperity be not puffed up.

Phil. Yet it is a wonder to see how such proud, surly, haughty, stately inselent, and thraasonical some be, because of their gifts : they think they touch the clouds with their heads, and that the earth doth not bear them ; they take themselves to be petty Angels, or some wonderful wights : they contemn and disdain all others which have not the like gifts : they do contemptuously over-look them, as a Lyon should over look a Mouse, a King a Begger ; or, as we say in a proverb, as the Devil looked over Linco'n.

Theol. Oh proud dust ! Oh haughty worms meat ! If they would bring their hearts before God, and their consciences, thoughts and affections, to be judged by his law, it would soon cool them, and take them down well enough ; they should see their wants and imperfections to be so great, that they indeed should have no more cause to boast of their

their gifts then the Black-more hath of his whiteness, because his teeth are white. The Holy Ghost cuts all our combs, and plucketh down all pride of flesh, when he saith, Job 36.

6. *How small a thing doth man understand of God?*

Phil. I pray you let us proceed to speak of the outward and gross pride of the world: and first of all tell me what you think of pride in apparel.

Theol. I think it to be a vanity of all vanities, and a folly of all follies: for to be proud of apparel, is as if a thief should be proud of his Halter, a begger of his clouts, a Child of his gay, or a fool of his bable.

Phil. Yet we see how proud many (especially women) be of such bables. For when they have spent a great part of the day in tricking and trimming, pricking and pinning, pranking and pouncing, girding and lacing, and braving up themselves in most exquisite manner, then out they come into the streets with their pedlers shop upon their back, and carry their crests very high, taking themselves to be little Angels, or at least somewhat more then other Women. Whereupon they do so exceedingly swell in pride, that it is to be feared they will burst with it as they walk in the streets. And truly we may think, the very stones in the street, and the beams in the houses, do quake and wonder at their monstrous pride. Ob what pride and vanity doth the world now abound with?

Theol.

Theol. You seem to be very hot in the matter.

Asun. Marry sir, I like him the better : for the world was never so full of pride as it is now a dayes.

Theol. Alas, alas ; indeed who can hold his peace at the pride of this Age ! - What thing is it, that flesh and blood, worms meat dust and ashes, dirt and dung, should so brave it out with their trim clouts. and that in the sight of God, Angels and men ? for the time will come, when both they & their gay clout shall be buried in a Grave : Yea, as *Job* saith *The grave shall be their house, and they shall make their bed in the dark.* And then they shall say *corruption, Thou art my Father : and to the worms, Thou art my Mother and my sister.* *Job* 17. 13, 14. What then shall it avail them thus to have ruffled it out in all their bravery when as suddenly they shall go down to destruction ? What did it profit the rich man to be sumptuously cloathed, and fare deliciously every day, when his body was buried in the dust, and his soul in hell-fire ?

Asun. I pray you sir, what say you to these great ruffs, which are borne up with supporters and rebatoes, as it were with post and rail ?

Theol. What should I say ? but God be merciful unto us. For such things do draw down the wrath and vengeance of God upon

ake, the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience. Col. 3. 6. And truly, we may well fear, that God will plague us for our abominable pride.

Asun. What say you then to these doubled and redoubled ruffs, (which are now in common use) strutting farthingals, long locks, fore tuffs, shag hair, and all these new fashions which are devised and taken up every day?

I beol. I say, they are far from that p'ainness, simplicity and modesty, which hath been in former ages: our fore-fathers knew no such things. It is recorded of William Rufus, sometime King of this Land, that when his Chamberlain on a time brought him a new pair of hose, he demanded of him what they cost; who answered three shillings: whereat the King being somewhat moved, commanded him to prepare him a pair of a mark. In Grafton's Chronicle. If Kings were then thought to exceed, that bestowed a mark upon a pair of Hose, what is to be thought of many mean men in these our dayes (yea, such as have no living, and are scarce of a good calling) which bestow as much upon a pair as the King did upon two, when he was thought most of all to exceed? But alas, alas, we have passed all bounds of modesty and measure; there is no hoe with us. Our Land is too heavy of this Sin.

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For

For the pride of all Nations, and the follies of all Countries are upon us ; how shall we bear them ? And as for these new fashions, the more new they be, the more foolish, and as foolish they that use them. For with our new fashions we are grown clean out of fashion. If we had as many fashions of our bodies, as we have of our attire, we should have as many fashions as fingers and toes. But vain men and women do apparently shew their vain minds by following so greedily such vain toys and fashions.

Afun. It was never a good world since starching and steeling, busks and whale-bones, supporters and rebatoes, full moons and hobby-horses, painting and dying, with selling of favour and complexion, came to be in use. For since these came in, covetousness, oppression, and deceit have encreased. For how else should pride be maintained ? And sure it is, within these ninety years the e things were not known nor heard of. And what say you then to painting of faces, laying open of naked breasts, dying of hair, wearing of perriwigs, and other hair cordnets, and top gallants ? And what say you to our artificial women, which will be better then God hath made them ? They like not his handy-work, they will mend it, and have other complexions, other faces, other hair, other bones, other breasts, and other bellies then God made them.

Theol.

Theol. This I say, that you and I and all the Lords people, have great and just cause of mourning, weeping and lamentation, because of such abomination is committed in *Israel*. *Dauids* eyes gushed out with rivers of tears, because men kept not Gods Laws; and an horrible fear came upon him, because men forsook the Law of God. *Psal.* 119. *Jeremiah* did sigh in secret, wishing that his head were full of water, and his eyes a fountain of tears, because of the sins of the people. *Jer.* 9. 1. *Nehemiah* mourned for the transgression of the Gods people. *Neh.* 1. 4. *Lots* just soul was vexed with the unclean conversation of the Sodomites: and shall we mourn nothing at all for these things? Shall we be no whit grieved for the pride of our Land? shall we shed no tears for such horrible and intollerable abominations? They are odious in the sight of God and men: the air stinketh of them. It is Gods marvelous patience that the Devil doth not carry them away quick, and rid the earth of them: or that fire and brimstone doth not come from Heaven, and consume them.

Antil. You are too hot in these matters of attire: you make more of them then there is cause.

Asun. I con him thanks: Gods blessing on his heart, I shall love him the better while I know him, because he is so earnest against such shameful and detestable pride, &c.

Antil. I marvel you should be so earnest in matters of apparel. You know well enough that apparel is an indifferent thing : and that Religion and the Kingdom of God doth not consist in these things.

Theol. I know right well that apparel in its own nature is a thing indifferent : but lewd wanton immodest, and offensive apparel is not indifferent. For all such abuse taketh away the indifferency of them, and maketh them sinful, and as ill by circumstance. For otherwise why should the Lord threaten by his Prophet that he would Visit the Princes and the King Children, and all such as were clothed with strange apparel, that is, the fashions of other Countries ? *Zephaniah* 1. 8. Again, why should the Lord so plague the proud dame and mincing minions of *Jerusalem*, for their pride and Vanity in attire, if there were no evil in such kind of abuse ? The Lord saith thus, in the third of *Esay*, against those brave and gallant Dames of *Jerusalem*, *Because the Daughters of Sion are haughty, and walk with stretched out necks, and with wandring eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and make a tinkling with their feet ; therefore shall the Lord make the heads of the Daughters of Sion bald, and the Lord shall discover their secret parts. In that day shall the Lord take away the*

ORNAMENTS

ornament of the slipper: , and the canls, and the round tires, the sweet balls and the bracelets, and the bonners, the tires of the head, and the fops, the head bands, and the tablets, the ear-rings, the rings, and the mufflers, the costly apparel, and the veils, and the wimples, and the crissping pins, and the glasses, and the fine linnen, and the woods, and the lawns. And instead of sweet savour, there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of dressing the hair, baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth: and burning instead of beauty. Then shall her gates mourn and lament; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.

Thus we see how terribly the Lord threatneth the gallant dames of Jerusalem, for their excessive and abominable pride. And this may well be a mirror, for the proud minions of our Age; which assuredly may well fear, the Lord will bring some such judgement upon them as he did upon the daughters of Jerusalem. For their sin is as great in this kind, as was the Daughters of Sion, and God is the same God now that he was then to punish it?

Antil. Tush, never speak so much of these matters of apparel; for we must do as others do, and follow the fashion, or else we shall not be esteemed.

Theol. If you follow them not, you shall be more esteemed of God, of his Angels, Saints, and all good men. As for all others, if

you esteem them more then these, you shew what you are.

Antil. Well for all that, say you what you will, pride is in the heart, and not in the apparel: for one may be proud of plain apparel, as well as of costly. And some are as proud of their faining bands and litle sets, as others are of their great ruffs

Theol. You speak foolishly, for how know you that? can you judge mens hearts and inward affections: can you say when mens and womens apparel is sober, modest and Christian like, that they have two hearts, and are proud of that attire? You go very far indeed to judge the heart. You ought to judge charitably, of such as go soberly and modestly attired, even that their heart is according unto their attire. And for you, we may rather think your heart is vain, light, and foolish, because your attire doth strong'y argue it. And as the Prophet saith, *The tryal of your countenance testifieth against you: you declare your sins as Sodom, and hide them not,* Isa. 3. 9.

Phil. I pray you then set down some rules for apparel out of the Scriptures.

Theol. I may well set down what I will: but surely most men and women will do what they list. For verily it may be thought that many of this Age have for-sworn God and his Word, and all goodness. For they are come to this point, let God say what he will, they will

will do what they list. For as the Prophet saith, *They have made a Covenant with Hell, and with Death, and are grown to an agreement,* Isa. 28.15. And I do verily think, if God himself should come down from Heaven in his own person, and dissuade men and women from this Vanity of a pael, yet would they still use it, as it were in despite of God and, as it were, to anger him the more. For they are so extraordinarily enamoured, and so immoderately delighted with it, and so continually and altogether dote on it, & are so wood-mad of it, that they will have it, though men & Angels, and all the world say nay: nay, which is more, though they should go to the Devil quick with it. And therefore it is but lost labor to speak against it, preach against it, or write against it. It is but even to plow the Sea, or knock at a deaf mans door; for there is no hope of any Reformation. Onely this we gain, that the World is reprov'd and convicted of sin. And these things shall stand in a record against them, in the last day: so that they may say they had a fair warning, and that there was a Prophet among them.

Phil. Yet for all this, I pray you set us down some Directions and Rules out of Gods Holy Book, concerning attire. For albeit some be very bad and outrageous in these things, yet there be some others which are well disposed and will (no doubt) make

make some conscience to frame themselves according to the Rule of Gods Word.

Theol. Well then for their sakes which are well disposed, I will set down some few directions. St. Paul in 1 Tim. 2 9. willeth that women should array themselves in comely apparel, with shamefastness and modesty, as becometh women that profess the fear of God: and not with broidered hair, or gold or pearls, or costly apparel. The Apostle St. Peter giveth like rules also; for he saith, speaking of Christian Matrons, and professors of holy Religion, That their apparel must not be outward, 1 Pet. 3. that is, not consist so much in outward bravery; as broidered hair, gold put about, &c. as it must be inward, that the hid man of the heart may be clothed with a meek & quiet spirit, which is a thing before God much set by. For after this manner, saith he, in times past the holy women which trusted in God, did attire themselves, &c.

Phil. Wherein doth this inward cloathing specially consist?

Theol. In four things which are set down in the fore named places, to wit, shamefastness, modesty, a quiet spirit, and a meek spirit.

Phil. These be fine suits of apparel indeed; I would all women would put them on and never put them off, but wear them continually; for they are better for wearing, & all apparel else is the worse.

Theol. If women would deck themselves inwardly

inwardly with these aforesaid Vertues they would be unto them as ornaments of gold, and jewels of pearl. *For the woman that feareth the Lord shall be praised.* Prov. 31. 30.

Phil. *But now I pray you sir, set down your iudgements for outward attire.*

Theol. This is all that I can say, touching that point, That it must be as the Apostle saith, comely, decent, handsome, neat and seemly; not light, not wanton, not lascivious, not immodest, not offensive.

Phil. *But who shall judge what is comely, sober, handfom, modest? &c.* For every man and woman will say their apparel is decent, and cleanly, both gallant, brave and flaunting soever they be.

Theol. Herein the examples of the most godly, wise grave, and modest men and women are to be followed; for who can better judge, what is comely sober and modest, then they?

Phil. *But we see some, even of the better sort, in this matter are a little infected, run out, and go beyond their bounds.*

Theol. The more is the pitty. But alas, we see the sway of the time, & rage of the stream is so violent that it carrieth before it, whatsoever is not settled, and very deep rooted. And some Godly and well-disposed persons, whose hearts are not with these things but with God, are notwithstanding perforce carried away

away with the violence of the wind and tide whose case, though it cannot well be descended or excused, yet it is to be pitied and lamented.

Phil. Have you any further directions touching this point?

Theol. There is one thing yet more to be added: to wit, that attire be according to mens places, callings and degrees. For that is not seemly for one, that is seemly for another; that becomes not one mans place, becometh another: For that is not meet for poor men, which is meet for rich men: nor that meet for mean men, which is meet for men of great place.

Phil. Then you think it is lawful for Kings, Princes, and great personages to wear pearl, gold, silver, and velvet, &c.

Theol. Questionless it is lawful for such, in sober manner and measure to wear the most costly and precious things which the earth can afford: and that to set forth the Magnificence, Pomp, and glory of their places: and therefore such things are in them most comely and decent.

Phil. But now adays few will keep within compass, few will know their places, but the most part run beyond their bounds, and leap quite out of their sockets.

Theol. True indeed: for now adays mean Gentlewomen. yea, some Gentlewomen of their own making, will ruffle it, and brave it

out in their attire like Countesses and Ladies of Honour. Plain folk also in the Country, will flaunt it like Courtiers, and like good Gentlemen and Gentlewomen; and they seem to say in their hearts, Fie on this plainness, we will have no more of it, we will not take it as we have done : So that now the old Proverb is verified : *Every Jack will be a Gentleman, and Joan is as good as my Lady.* For now we cannot by their apparel, discern the Maid from the Mistress, nor the waiting Gentlewoman from her Lady : and thus we see in this matter of apparel how all is out of joynt.

Phil. *Is there any more to be said in this case ?*

Theol. There is another thing yet to be respected in this matter of attire.

Phil. *What is that ?*

Theol. That is to be according to mens abilities. For it is lamentable to consider, how poor men and women, poor hired servants, milk-maids, and such like, go quite beyond their abilities. And more lamentable to see what wretched and ill-favoured shifts they make to compass these things : so sharp and so eagerly are they set upon them.

Phil. *Well Sir, now you have sufficiently rolled the stone, and at large satisfied us touching the matter of Pride ; which is the first sign of Condemnation. Now to proceed to the second, which is Whoredome ; and unfold unto us out of the*
Scriptures

Scriptures the danger thereof.

Theol. Solomon in his Proverbs saith, *That the mouth of a strange woman [or an Harlot] is as a deep pit; he that is a detestation to the Lord shall fall therein.* Prov. 22. 14. Wherein he plainly sheweth, that those whom God detesteth, and is exceeding angry with, are given over to this Vice. And again, *A Whore is as a deep ditch, and as a narrow pit* Prov. 23. 27. Noting thereby, that if a man be once fallen in with an Harlot, he shall as hardly get out again, as a man that is plunged into a very deep & narrow pit, where he can scant stir himself. The same Solomon, in the Book of Ecclesiastes yeilds us the reason hereof, namely, because she is as nets, snares, and bands, wherein if a man be once taken, he is fast enough for getting out. *I find,* saith he, *more bitter then death, the woman whose heart is as nets and snares, and her bands as bands.* He that is good before God, shall be delivered from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her. Eccl 7. 26. We do therefore plainly see in what a labyrinth and dangerous case they be that are left of God, and given over to Whoredome and Harlots: and therefore it is said, *Desire not her beauty in thine heart, neither let her eye-lids catch thee: for by a whorish woman, a man is brought to a morsel of bread; and the Adulteress burneth for life which is precious.* Prov. 6. 25. And again, he saith,

Albeis

Albeit the lips of an harlot drop as a honey comb, and the roof of her mouth is softer then Oyl; yet her latter end is as bitter as wormwood, and as sharp as a two edged Sword. Prov. 5. 3, 4. All these prudent speeches of the Holy Ghost, do most evidently shew unto us what a fearful thing it is to commit Whoredome, and so to fall into the hands of Whores and Harlots. Therefore Job saith of the wicked, Their soul aye is in youth, and their life among the Wagemongers Job 36. 14.

Phil. You have very well shewed out of Gods Book, the great danger of Whoredome and Adultery. And it is greatly to be lamented, that men in this age make so light of it as they do, and that it is so common a vice; nay that some (alas with grief I speak it!) do profess it, live by it, and prostitute themselves wholly unto it.

The 1. Such men and women may justly fear the plaguing hand of God; for the Lord saith by his Prophet; Though I fed them to the full, yet they committed Adultery, and assembled themselves by companies in harlots houses. They rose up in the morning like fed Horses, for every man neighed after his neighbours Wife. Shall I not visit for these things saith the Lord? shall not my soul be avenged on such a Nation?

Phil. Methinks if men were not altogether hardened in this sin, and even past feeling, & past grace, surely this threatening of God should terrifie them.

Theol.

The Plain Man's

Theol. A man would think so indeed: but now we may take up the old complaint of the Prophet, *I hearkned and heard, and loe, no man spake aright: no man repented him of his evil, saying, What have I done? Everyone turneth to their race, as the horse rusheth into the battel,* Jer. 8. 6.

Antil. Tush, Whoredoms is but a trick of youth; and we see all men have their imperfections.

Theol. You speak prophanely and wickedly: For shall we count that but a trick of youth, for the which the Lord smote 23 thousand of his own people in one day? Shall we count that but a trick of youth, for the which the Lord threatned David his own Servant, that the Sword should never depart from his house? *2 Sam* 12. 10. Shall we count that a trick of youth, for the which *Hamor* and *Seckem* the father and the Son, with many other, both men, women and children, were cruelly murdered, by *Simson* and *Levi*, the Sons of *Jacob*? *Gen.* 34. 25. Shall we count that but a trick of youth, for the which the Lord slew *Hophni* and *Phineas*, the two Sons of *Eli* the Priest, in the battel of the Philistines? *1 Sam* 4. 11. Shall we thus set all at six and seven, and make light of such horrible Villanies? Doth not the severity of the punishment, shew the greatness of the sin?

Doth not the Apostle say, *These things came unto them for our examples, upon whom the ends of*

the world are come? 1 Cor. 10. 11. And yet you pass it over with a tush, and a trick of youth, as if God were to be dallied with. No, no, be not deceived, God is not mocked. They which will not be moved now in hearing, shall one day be crushed in pieces in feeling. And they which now call whoredome a trick of youth, shall one day howl and cry, yell and yelp for such tricks, with wo and a'as that ever they were born.

Antil. Oh sir, you must bear with youth; youth you know is frail, and youth will be youthful when you have said all you can:

Theol. Yea, but God doth allow no more liberty to youth, then unto age: but bindeth all upon pain of death, to the obedience of his Commandments. The Apostle saith, Let young men be sober minded, Tit. 2. 6. David saith, where will a young man cleanse his way? in taking heed thereto according to thy word. Psal. 119. 9. The wise man saith, Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth: while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them, Eccl. 12. 1.

Phil. Yet we see men are so violently carried after their lusts, and so desperately bent that they will have the present sweet and pleasure of sin, come of it what will. Come sickness, come death, come Hell, come damnation, they are at a point, they will pay the highest price for their lust. They will

will purchase their pleasures with the loss of their souls. O woful purchase ! O damnable pleasures !

Theol. Sweet meat will have sower savce, & a dram of pleasure a pound of sorrow. Such cursed caitiffs shall at last pay a dear shot for their pleasures. Such desperate wretches shall one day know (to their everlasting wo) what is it to provoke God, and to sin with so high an hand against him. They shall well know in spight of their hearts, that Vengeance is prepared for the wicked, and that there is a God that judgeth the earth. Let all men therefore take heed in time ; for *Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge*, Heb. 13. 4. And the Apostle saith flatly, That Whoremongers and Adulterers shall not inherit the Kingdome of God, 1 Cor. 6. 9 "Let therefore no fornicator, " or unclean person be found among us, as was " *Esau* : but let us abstain from fleshly lusts, " which fight against the soul. And let every " one know how to possess his Vessel in holiness and Honour, and not in the lust of concupiscence, as the Gentiles which know " not God, 1 Thes. 4. 4.

Herein let us consider the wise speech of an ancient Father : *sin while it is in doing misistretch some pleasure ; but when it is committed, the short pleasure thereof vanisbeth away, and long sorrow commeth instead of it.* (Chrys. in Mat.) Neither let us here reject the saying of a wise Heathen

Heathen. *Shun pleasure for fear of smart. Some things follow sweet, and joy heaviness,* Isocrat. ad Demon.

Antil. *Yet for all this, you shall not make me believe, that whoredome is so hainous a matter. you make more of it then it is.*

Theol. True indeed: for you and such as you are will believe nothing against your lusts and fleshly delights: and that is the cause why you are deaf on this ear. I will therefore add a word or two more (out of the Oracles of God) to that which hath been spoken. The wise King saith, *He that committeth Adultery with women, destroyeth his own soul: Prov. 6. 32.* And so is necessary to his own death; which is no small matter. For we use to say, if a man hang himself, drown'd himself, or any manner of way take away himself, that he was cursed of God, that Gods hand was heavy against him, that the devil ought him a shame, and now he hath paid it him. And all the Country rings of such a strange accident, when and where it falleth out: and the Coroner of the Country doth sit upon it. How much more may all the world wonder at this; that a man should destroy his own soul, and wittingly and willingly cast away himself for ever? Now the Holy Ghost saith, *The Adulterer doth such an act, giveth such a venture, and willingly murdereth himself, &c.* For sure it is, that the great
Coroner

Coroner of Heaven, that crowns whom
will crown, shall one day sit upon it, and give
judgement. Moreover, as the Adulterer sinneth
against his body, after a special manner
as witnesseth the Apostle. 1 Cor. 6. 18. *Adultery
he sinneth against his goods and outward
state, as the holy man Job testifieth, saying
Adultery is a fire that devoureth to destruction
and it will root out all our increase.* Job 31. 13.
Furthermore, he sinneth against his own name.
*For the Adulterer shall find a wound, and dishonour
; and his reproach shall never be put away.*
Prov. 6. 33.

Item, He sinneth against his Wife, who is his
companion, and the wife of his covenant : Mal. 2. 14, 15. And God saith in the same place
*Let none trespass against the Wife of his youth
keep your selves in your spirit, and transgress not.*
Last of all, he sinneth against his Children and
posterity, as the Lord said to David, *because
thou hast despised me, and done this, therefore
the sword shall never depart from thy house. Behold,
I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own
house.* 2 Sam. 12. 10. Now therefore to con-
clude this point, we may see how many deadly
wounds men make themselves by committing
of Adultery : They wound themselves
in their souls : they wound themselves in their
bodies : they wound themselves in their
goods : they wound themselves in their
Wives.

Wives, and in their Children.
 What man, except he were stark mad would
 thrust in himself in so many places at one
 time? The Adulterer with his one sin of A-
 dultery, maketh all these deadly Wounds in
 himself: and it is an hundred to one he will
 never get them cured, but will die, and bleed
 to death of them. Lo thus you see the dange-
 rous quality and condition of this sin. Shall we
 now therefore make light of it? Shall we say,
 it is but a trick of youth? Shall we smooth o-
 ver the matter with sweet words, when the
 Holy Ghost maketh it so hainous and capital?
 Shall we make nothing of that which draweth
 down Gods wrath upon the Soul, body, goods,
 name, wife and children? That were an intol-
 lerable blindness, and most extream hardness
 of heart. *Adultery is the very hook of the Devil,*
whereby he draweth us to destruction. Basil in E-
 pist. And another Godly Father saith, *That*
Adultery is like a furnace, whose mouth is glutto-
ny, the flame pride, the sparkles filthy veras, the
smoke an ill name, the ashes poverty, and the end
shame. (Gregory.) And so we plainly see, that
 howsoever, we regard not this sin, but flatter
 our selves in it, yet those who e eyes the Lord
 hath opened, have in all ages condemned it as
 most flagitious and horrible: yea, the very
 Heathen will rise up in judgement against us,
 who have spoken and written many things,
 against

against this filthy and beastly Vice.

Phil. Now indeed you have sufficiently branded the vice of Adultery and laid out the ugliness thereof, that all men may behold it stark naked, and abhor it. If any man (notwithstanding all this) will venture upon it, he may be said to be a most desperate Monster. For what doth he else but (as it were) put his finger into the Lyons mouth, and (as it were) take the Bear by the tooth? and they may well know what will follow, and what they may look for. Let all men therefore in time take heed to themselves, and to their own souls, as they will answer it at their uttermost peril, at the dreadful day of Judgement, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed. But now one thing resteth; to wit that you should shew us the special roots and causes of Adultery.

Theol. There be five special causes of it: The first is our natural corruption: for the very spawn and seed of all sin is our corrupt nature: and this of all other is a most inherent sin, as witnesseth the Apostle James, saying, *When lust hath conceived it brings forth sin: and sin when it is perfected bringeth forth Death.* Jam. 1. 15.

The second is gluttony and fulness of bread: For when men have filled their bellies, and cramm'd their paunches as full of good chear, Wine and strong Drink as their skins can hold, what are they meet for, or what mind they

they else, but adultery and uncleanness: And therefore well saith one, *Great nourishment, and gross food is the shap of Lust.* The Heathen Poet could skill to say, *Sine Cerere & Baccho friget Venus*, Without meat and drink, lust waxeth cold. And to this effect the wise King saith, *That their eyes shall behold strange women, whose hearts are set upon wine and belly-cheer.* And therefore he adviseth all men, not to look upon the wine when it appeareth red, when it sheweth his colour in the cup, or stirreth very kindly: and that for fear of this after-clap. An ancient Writer saith to the same purpose. *He that delicately pampereth his belly, and yet would overcome the spirit of fornication, is like to him that would quench a fire with oyl.*

Therefore to close up this point, sure it is, though men pray, hear and read much, and be otherwise well disposed yet except they be abstemious in diet, they will be much troubled with Lust.

The third cause of Adultery is idleness: for when men are lazy, luskish, and idle, having nothing to do, they lye wide open to adultery, and lust creepeth into them. Some Historiographers write the Crab fish is very desirous to eat Oysters; but because she cannot perforce open them, she waiteth her time, when they open themselves, and then she puts in her Claw, and pulleth out the Oyster: so Satan watcheth

watcheth his opportunity against us, that he may infect and breath into us all filthy lusts, and adulterous desires, when we lye open unto him by idleness. Wisely therefore to this point saith the Greek Poet : *Much rest nourisheth Lust.* And another Poet saith :

*Quaritur Aegyptus quare sit factus adulter :
In promptu causa est ; de idiosus erat.*

Sloathful laziness is the cause of *Adultery* : And therefore another saith, *Eschew idleness, and cut the very sinews of Lust.*

Otia fitillas periere Cupidinis, arcus.

The fourth cause of *Adultery*, is wanton apparel : whch is a minstrelles, which pipes up a dance unto Whoredome. But of this enough before.

The fifth and last cause of *Adultery*, is the hope of impunity, or escaping of punishment. For many being blinded and hardened by *Satan*, think they shall never be called to any account for it ; they think all is safe, and that God seeth them not. And therefore *Job* saith, *The eye of the Adulterer waiteth for the twilight, and saith no eye shall see us.* Job 24. 15. And in another place, *How shall God know : Can he judge throu the dark Clouds ?* But verily verily, though the Adulterer do never so closely and cunningly convey his sin under a canopy, yet the time will come when it shall be disclosed to his eternal shame. *For God will bring e-*
very

every work to judgement, with every secret thought, whether it be good or evil Eccles. 12. 14. For he hath set our most secret things in the sight of his countenance. Psal. 90. And he will lighten the things that are hid in darkness, and make the counsels of the heart manifest. 1 Cor. 4. For this cause Job saith, When I sin, thou watchest me, and wilt not purge me from my sin, Job 10. 14.

Phil. Now you have shewed us the causes of Adultery, I pray you shew us the remedies.

Theol. There be six remedies for Adultery, which no doubt will greatly prevail, if they be well practised:

Phil. Which be they?

Theol. Labour, Abstinence, | Six Remedies
Temperance, Prayers, Restraint | for Adultery.
of our Senses, shunning of Womens company, and all occasions whatsoever.

Phil. Well sir, now you have waded deep enough in the second sign of damnation: I pray you let us proceed to the third, which is Covetousness. And as you have laid naked the two former, so I pray strip this stark naked also, that all men may see what an ugly Monster it is, and therefore hate it, and abhor it.

Theol. I would willingly satisfy your mind; but in this point I shall never do it sufficiently. For Covetousness is the foulest fiend, and blackest Devil of all the rest. It is even the great Belzebub himself. Therefore I shall never be

be able fully to describe it unto you : but I will do what I can to strip and whip it stark naked. And howsoever the men of this earth, & blind worldlings take it to be most sweet beautiful and amiable and therefore do embrace it, entertain it, and welcome it, as though there were some happiness in it ; yet I hope when I have shewed them the face thereof in a glass (even the true glass of Gods Word) they will be no more in such love , but quite out of conceit with it. I will therefore hold out this glass unto them.

St. Paul to Timothy, brandeth this sin in the fore-head, and boareth it in the ears, that all men may know it and avoid it, when he saith, *Covetousness is the root of all evil: 1 Tim. 6. 10.* Our Lord Jesus also giveth us a watch-word to take heed of it, saying, *Take heed and beware of covetousness, Luke 12. 15.* As if he should say, touch it not, come not near it ; it is the very breath of the Devil, it is present death, and the very Rats-bane of the soul. The Apostle layeth out the great danger of this sin, and doth exceedingly grind the face of it, when he saith, *That the end of all such as mind earthly things is damnation. Phil. 3. 19.* Let all carnal worldlings and muchish minded men lay this to heart, and consider well of it ; I ft they say one day , Had I wist.

Phil. Good sir, lay open to us the true nature of

of Covetousness, and what it is, that we may more perfectly discern it.

Theol. Covetousness is an immoderate desire of having.

Phil. I hope you do not think frugality, thriftiness, and good husbandry to be covetousness.

Theol. Nothing less: for they be things commanded; being done in the fear of God, and with a good conscience.

Phil. Do you not think it lawful also for men to do their worldly business, and to use faithfulness and diligence in their calling, that they may provide for themselves and their families?

Theol. Yes no doubt; and the rather if they do these things with a calling upon God for a blessing upon the works of their hands, and use prayer and thanksgiving before and after their labour, taking heed all the day long of the common corruptions of the world, as swearing, cursing, lying, dissembling, deceiving, greedy getting, &c.

Phil. Wherein I pray you doth covetousness especially consist?

Theol. In the greedy desire of the mind. For we may lawfully do the works of our Calling, and play the good Husbands and good Husbands: but we must take heed that distrustfulness and inward greediness of the world do not catch our hearts.

Phil. Such covetousness is especially of the heart.

D

heart, how may we know certainly when the heart is infected?

Theol. There be four special signs of the hearts infection.

Phil. Which be they?

Theol. The first is an eager and sharp-set desire of getting. Therefore the Holy Ghost saith, *He that hasteth to be rich shall not be unpunished.* Prov. 28. 22. And again, *An Heritage is hastily gotten at the beginning: but the end thereof shall not be blessed.* Prov. 20. 21. The Heathen man also saith, *No man can be both justly and hastily rich.* [Dem. in Olin. 2.]

The second is a pinching and niggardly keeping of our own: that is when men (being able to give) will hardly part with any thing, though it be to never so holy and good use. And then at last, with much ado, for shame they give something, it cometh heavily from them (God wot) and scantily.

The third is the neglect of holy duties: that is, when mens minds are so taken up with the love of earthly things, that they begin to slack and cool in matters of Gods Worship.

The fourth and last is a trusting in riches, and staying upon them, as though our lives were maintained by them, or did consist onely in them; which our Lord Jesus flatly denieth, saying, *Though a man have abundance, yet his life consisteth not in the things which he hath.* Luke 12. 15.

These

These then are four evident signs & tokens whereby we may certainly discern that mens hearts and entrails are infected with Covetousness.

Phil. *You have very well satisfied us in this point now let us understand the original causes of Covetousness.*

Theol. There be two special causes of Covetousness : The one is the ignorance and distrust of Gods Providence.

Two causes of Covetousness.

The other is the want of tasting and feeling of Heavenly things. For till men taste better things, they will make much of these : till they feel Heaven, they will love earth : till they be religious, they will be covetous. Therefore the cause is soon espyed, why men are so sharp set upon these outward things, and do so admire riches, worldly pomp, pleasures, and treasures : Because they know no better, they never had tast nor feeling of those things which are eternal.

Phil. *Now as you have shewed us the causes of covetousness, so let us also hear of the effects.*

Theol. If I once enter into this, I shall be intangled & wound up in amaze, where I know not how to get out again. For the evil effects of this Vice are so many, and so great, that I know not where to begin, or where to end.

Phil. *If you do but give us some taste of them, it shall suffice.*

Theol. Then will I briefly dispatch things in order. And first of all, I reason from the words of the Apostle before alleged, That if Covetousness and the love of money be the root of all evil, then it is the root of idolatry, the root of murder, the root of theft, the root of lying, the root of swearing, the root of symony, the root of bribery, the root of usury, the root of Lawing, the root of all contentions in the Church, and the root of all brabbling and brawling in the Common-wealth. Moreover, it spreadeth far and near, it dwelleth in every house, in every Town, in every City : it pryeth into every corner, it creepeth into every heart : it annoyeth our Physicians, it infecteth our Divines, it choaketh our Lawyers, it woundeth our Farmers, it baneth our Gentlemen, it murdereth our Trades-men, it bewitcheth our Merchants, it stingeth our Mariners. O Covetousness, Covetousness ! It is the poyson of all things, the wound of Christianity, the bane of all goodness. For Covetousness marrs all ; it marreth all every where, in all places, in all degrees, among all Persons. It marreth marriages ; for it coupleth young to old, and old to young. It marreth Hospitality, it marreth all good House-keeping, it marreth Alms-deeds, it marreth Religion, it marreth Professors, it marreth Ministers, it marreth Magistrates, it marreth all

all things. And therefore what sin so grievous, what sin so odious, what Vice so enormous as this? For this cause it was prettily said of one, That all other Vices are but Factors to Covetousness, and serve for Porters to fetch and bring in her living. She maketh symony her drudge, bribery her drudge, usury her drudge, deceit her drudge, swea ing her drudge, lying her drudge. O what a Devil incarnate is this, that setteth so many Vices a work, and hath so many Factors and underlings to serve her turn! Are they not in a pretty case think you, that are infected with this sin? O they are in a most miserable case. It had been good they had never been born. For being alive, they are dead; dead I mean in their souls. For Covetousness is souls poyson, and souls bane. Covetousness is the strongest poyson to the soul that is. It is a Confection of all the Spiders, Toads, Snakes, Adders, Scorpions, Basilisks, and all other the most venomous Vermin of the whole World. If the Devil can get us to take down but one penny weight of it, it is enough, he desires no more, for presently we fall down stark dead. *They that will be rich* (he meaneth in all haste, by hook or by crook) *fall into temptations, and snares, and into many foolish and noysome lusts, which draw men in destruction and perdition.* 1 Tim. 6. 9.

For as covetousness is rank poyson to the soule, so the Apostle compareth it to a deep gulf, wherein thousands are drowned. And therefore he addeth in the same place, *But thou, O man of God, flie these things.* In which Words he doth most gravely advise all the Ministers of the Word of God to take heed of it. For as it is dangerous in all men: so it is most dangerous and offensive in Preachers of the Gospel.

Phil. *Indeed it must needs be granted that covetousness is a very grievous sin: yea, even a Monster with seven heads. Yea for all that, we see in this our Iron Age, how many of all sorts are infected with it, and how few will give any thing to an holy use. Most men now adayes have nothing to spare for Christ, nothing for his Gospel, nothing for his Church, nothing for the poor Children of God, and needy Members of Christ. Christ is little beholding unto them: for they will do nothing for him, no, not so much as speak a good word in his cause, or the cause of his poor Saints. Every little thing with them is too much for God, & good men. For when they come to giving unto holy and necessary uses, then they will stick at a penny, & grudge at a Groat, and every thing is too much: But to bestow upon themselves, nothing is too much. Nothing is too much for lust, for pleasure for back for belly, for bullaing, for cards and dice, for whores and barleins for rioting and revelling, for taverns and brockel.*

brothel-houses. Hundreds and thousands are little enough, and too little for their expenses this way. It is lamentable to consider what masses of money are spent & bestowed upon these things. But alas, alas, how heavy an account are they to make in the day of the Lord, which so spend their Lands, Livings, and Revenues ! I quake to think what shall become of them at last. It were well for them, if they might be in no worse case than a Crocodile, or a Cur dog.

Theol It is most certain that you say: and we all have great cause to lament it, and to take up the old complaint of the Prophet Jeremiah, saying From the least of them, even unto the greatest of them, every one is given unto covetousness : and from the Prophet even unto the Priests, they all deal falsly. And another Prophet saith, They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for rewards, and the Priests thereof teach for hire, and the Prophe:ts thereof prophesie for money : yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, is not the Lord amongst us : No evil can come unto us. But these holy Prophets and men of God do fully describe unto us the state of our time ; wherein though all be corrupted ; yet we bear our selves stoutly upon God, we presume of his favour because of our outward profession, and say in our hearts. No evil can come unto us.

Asun. You say very true, Sir, The world was never so set upon covetousness, and men were never so greedily given to the world as now adays. And yet (in truth) there is no cause why men should be so sharp set upon this world. For this world is but vanity : and all is but pelf and trash. Fie on this muck.

Phil. Many such men as you are, can skill to give good words, and say, Fie on this world, all is but vanity ; and yet for all that, in your daily practice, you are nevertheless set upon the world, nor never the more seek after God. You hear the Word of God no whit the more, you read no whit the more, you pray never the more, which evidently shewesb, That all your fair speeches and protestations are nought else but hypocrisie, and lasing. Your heart is not with God, for all this. All is but words, there is no such feeling in the heart, and therefore I may justly say to you, as God himself said to his people This people have said well, all that they have said. On that there were an heart in them to fear us, and keep my Commandments. Deut. 5. 29.

Ticol. His words indeed are good, if his heart were according. For all things considered, there is no cause why men should be so given to this world, for they must leave it, when they have done all that they can. As we say, To day a man, to morrow none. And as the Apostle saith, We brought nothing into this world ;

world ; and it is certain we shall carry nothing
 out. 1 Tim. 6. We must all dye, we know
 not how soon : why therefore should men set
 their hearts upon such uncertainties, and de-
 ceivable things ? for all things in this world
 are more light then a feather , more brittle
 then glass, more fleeting then a shadow, more
 vanishing then smoak, more unconstant then
 the Wind : Doubtless, saith the Prophet Da-
 vid, *man walketh in a shadow, and disquieteth*
himself in vain ; he heapeth up riches, and can-
not tell who shall gather them. Psal. 39. 6. I
 wonder therefore that these Moles and muck-
 worms of this earth should so mind these sha-
 dowish things, and so dote on them as they
 do. If they were not altogether hardned and
 blinded by the Devil, they would not be so
 nearly knit to the clod, and the penny, as they
 are ; thinking, and always imagining, that
 there is no happiness but in these things which
 are but dung and dross : and at last they will
 give us the slip, when we think our selves most
 sure of them.

The wise King, who had the greatest expe-
 rience of these things that ever man had, for
 he enjoyed whatsoever this world could
 afford, upward and downward, backward and
 forward, yet could he find nothing in them but
 Vanity and vexation of Spirit. All these things,
 riches, wealth, honour, pleasures and treasures.

will most notably deceive us in the end, give us the slip, and be gone. For he compareth riches, and all the glory of the world to an Eagle or Hawk, which a man holdeth upon his fist, stroketh her, maketh much of her, taketh great delight and pleasure in her, and saith, He will not take ten pounds for her; yet all on the sudden she taketh her flight, and flyeth up into the air, and he never seeth her more, nor she him. The words of the Holy Ghost are these, *Wilt thou cause thine eyes to flye after them,* (meaning Riches)? *Thou mayst; but they will not be found* For they will make them selves wings like to the Eagle, which flyeth up to Heaven. From thence we may learn, that though we set our hearts never so much on any thing here below, yet at the last it shall be taken from us, or we from it. Therefore all worldly men do but weave the Spiders web, and may fitly be compared to the silly spider, who toyleth her self, and laboureth all the week long to finish up her Web, that she may lodge her self in it, as in her own house, and freehold. But alas! at the Weeks end, a Maid, in a moment, with one brush of the broom, dispossesther her of her inheritance, which she had purchased with great labour and much ado. Even so, when the men of this world have with much care and travel, purchased great Lands and Revenues, and gathered all that they can; yet

yet on the sudden, death (with one stroke of his direful dart) will make them give up the Ghost, and then where are they? It was prettily therefore said of a man in the light of nature, *No man hath ever lived so happily in this life, but in his life time many things have befallen him for the which he hath wish'd rather to dye then to live.* [Seneca.] And assuredly I think there was never any man lived any one day upon the face of the earth, but some grief or other either did or justly might invade his mind ere night; either in the temptations of the World, the Flesh, or the Devil; or in regard of soul, body, goods, or name; in regard of wife, children, friends or neighbours: in regard of dangers to Prince, State, Church or Commonwealth: in regard of casualties, and loss by Water, by fire, by Sea or by Land. What a life therefore is this, that hath not one good day in it? who would desire to dwell long in it? For it lyeth open every day to manifold miseries, dangers, losses, casualties, reproaches, shame, infamy, poverty, sickness, diseases, cholicks, agues, tooth-ache, head-ache, back-ache, bone-ache, and a thousand calamities.

Phil. You have very well described unto us, the vanity of this life, and that no day is free from one sorrow, or other, one grief or other: the which thing our Lord Jesus ratifieth in the reason which he bringeth why men should not distrustfully care

for to morrow. For, saith he, sufficient to the day is the evil thereof : O, as some read it, The day hath enough with his own grief. Wherein he doth plainly shew that every day hath his sorrow, his evil, his grief, and his thwart. But, I pray you, proceed further in this point.

Theol. This I say further : That when men have swinkled and sweat, earked and cared, moiled and turmoiled, drudged and droiled by night and by day, by Sea and by Land, with much care and sorrow, much labour and grief, to rake together the things of this life ; yet at last all will away again, and we must end where we began. For as Job said, *Naked we come in to the world, and naked we must go out.* Job 1. For even as a Wind-mill beateth it self, maketh a great noyse, whistleth and whisketh about from day to day, all the year long, yet at the years end standeth still where it began, being not moved one foot backward or forward : so when men have bustered and blown all that they can, and have even run themselves out of breath, to scrape up the commodities of the earth, yet at last they must (in spight of their beards) end where they begun ; end with nothing, as they begun with nothing : end with a winding sheet, as they begun with swadling clouts. For what is become of the greatest Monarches, Kings, Princes, Potentates and Magnificoes that ever the world had ?

day had ? where is *Cyrus, Darius, Zerxes, Alexander, Caesar, Pompey, Scipio, and Hannibal* ? where are the *Valiant Henries, and Noble Edwards of England* ? Are they not all gone down to the house of Oblivion ? Are they not all returned to their dust, & their thoughts perish ? Though they were as Gods, yet have they dyed as men, and are fallen like others.

Who now careth for them ? who talketh of them, who heareth them ? who regardeth them ? do not *Beggars* tread upon them ? Yet while they lived, they were the *Lords of the world* ; they were as terrible as *Lyons*, fearful to all men, full of *Pomp and Glory, Dignity and Majesty*. They plowed up all things, they bare all before them, and who but they ? But now they have given up the Ghost, and are (as *Job saith*) gone down to the House appointed for all the living. *Job 30. 23.* Their pomp is descended with them, and all their glory is buried in the ashes. They are now covered under a clod, cast out into a Vault, made companions to *Toads*, and the worms do eat them : and what is become of their souls, is most of all to be feared.

Thus we see how all flesh doth but make a vain shew for a while upon this Theatre of misery, fetcheth a compass about, and is presently gone. *Serius aut citius sedem proferamus ad unam,* First or last we must all to the grave!

Asun.

Alun. You have made a very good speech, it doth me good to hear it. I wonder a'l these things considered, that men should be so wholly given to this world, as they are. I think the Devil hath bewitched them; for they shall carry nothing with them when they die, but their good deeds and their ill.

Theol. The dudges and snudges of this world, may very fitly be compared to a Kings Sumpter-horse, which goeth laden all the day long with as much gold and treasure as he can bear, but at night his treasure is taken from him; he is turned into a sorry dirty stable, and hath nothing left him but his galled back: Even so the rich Cormorants and Caterpillars of the earth, which here have treasured and hoorded up great heaps of Gold and Silver, (with the which they travel loaden thorow this world) shall in the end be stript out of all, let down into their grave, and have nothing left them, but their galled consciences, with the which they shall be tumbled down into the dungeon of eternal darkness.

Phil. Wherein doth the fling and strength of this world especially consist?

Theol. Even as the great strength of Sampson lay in his hair, so the great strength of the world lyeth in her two breasts, the one of pleasure, the other of profit. For she, like a notable Strumpet, by laying out of these her breasts,

breasts, doth bewitch the Sons of men, and allureth thousands to her lust. For if she cannot win them with the one breast, yet she gaineth them with the other; if not with pleasure, then with profit; if not with profit, then with pleasure: He is an odd man of a thousand that sucketh not of the one breast or the other. But sure it is, which soever he sucketh, he shall be poysoned: for she giveth none other milk but rank poyson. The world therefore is like to an alluring *7ael*, which sitteth at her door to entice us to come in, and eat of the milk of her pleasures: *7udges 4. 21.* but when she hath once got us in, she is ready (even while we are eating) with her hammer and her nail, to pierce thorow our brains.

Phil. I see plainly, this world is a very strumpet, a very bait, and a snaring net, wherein thousands are taken. It is very bird lime which doth so belime our affections, that they cannot ascend upward. It is like the weights of a clock, hang'd upon our soul, which draw them down to the earth; it naileth us fast down to the ground: it mortereth us into clay: it maketh us abominable unto God. For I remember God made a Law, That whosoever goeth with his breast upon the ground, should be abominable unto us, *Lev. 11.* How much more these carnal worldlings, which are fast lodg'd to the earth!

Theol. The Apostle St. James, seeing into the

The Plain Man's

the deep wickedness of this world, and knowing right well how odious it maketh us in the sight of God, cryeth out against it, terming it Adultery, and all worldlings, Adulterers, because they forsake Christ their true Husband, and worshiply give their hearts to this World. O ye Adulterers, and Adulteresses, saith he, know ye not that the amity of this world is the enmity of God? Whosoever therefore will be made a friend to this world, makes himself the enemy of God. Jam. 4. And who dare stand forth and say, I will be the enemy of God? Who therefore dares be a worldling for every worldling is the enemy of God: what then will become of you, O ye wicked worldlings?

Phil. It appeareth then plainly by the Scriptures, that the excessive love of this world, and insatiable desire of having it, is a most dangerous thing, and men do they know not what, run so greedily after it.

Theol. The Heathen man will rise up in judgement against us; for he saith, *Unsatiable is the foulest evil amongst mortal men.* [Soph.] But many of our Sea-gulfs and Whirl-pools make no conscience of it. They think it is no sin, they devour and swallow up all, and yet are never satisfied: they will have all, and more then all, and the Devil and all. The whole world cannot satisfie their mind; but God must create new worlds to content them.

them. These men are sick of the golden drop-
 e; the more they have the more they de-
 re. The love of money increaseth, as money
 self increaseth. But the Scripture saith, *He
 that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver,*
Eccles. 5. 10. Oh therefore that we would
 strive earnestly to get out of this gulf of hell,
 and tread the *Moon* (that is all worldly things)
 under our feet. *Apoc. 12. 1.* as it is spoken
 of the Church: and that we would set our
 affections on the things that are above, and
 not on the things that are beneath: that we
 would flie an high pitch, and soare aloft as the
 Eagles, looking down at this World, and all
 things in it, as at our feet; contemning it, and
 treading the very glory of it under our feet,
 that it may never have more power over us.

Phil. *O happy, and twice happy are they that
 can do so! and I beseech the Almighty God to
 give us his holy Spirit, whereby we may be carried
 above this world, into the Mountains of Spices.*
*For, how happy a thing is it to have our conversa-
 tion in Heaven! that is, to have an inward
 conversation with God, by much Prayer, Read-
 ing Meditation, and Heavenly Affections, This
 indeed is to climb up above the world, and to
 converse in the chambers of peace. O therefore
 that we would seriously and thoroughly conceive
 and consider of this world as it is! that we
 would well weigh the Vanity of it, and the
 excellency*

excellency of that which is to come; that so we might hate the one, and love the other; despise the one, and embrace the other; & love God more then ever we did, and this world less! For what is this world but vanity of vanities?

Ans. You do so exceedingly abuse that which some make their God. You speak contemptuously of that which most men have in greatest price and admiration. You disgrace that which multitudes would Grace. You make light of that which numbers make greatest account of. Let us therefore hear your Reasons. Shew us more fully what it is; describe it unto us.

Ans. The world is a sea of glass, a pageant of fond delights, a theatre of vanity, a labyrinth of error, a gulf of grief, a sty of filthiness, a vale of misery, a spectacle of woe, a river of tears, a stage of deceit, a cage full of owls, a den of Scorpions, a wilderness of Wolves, a Cabin of Bears, a whirl-wind of passions, a feigned Comedy, a delectable phrensie, where is a false delight, assured grief, certain sorrow, uncertain pleasure, lasting woe, fickle worth, long heaviness, short joy.

Phil. Now you have indeed described it to the full, and laid it out (as it were) in orient colours. And a man would think he were bewitched or stark mad, which hereafter should set his mind on it. But yet I am desirous to hear a little more

of that which I asked you before : wherein the strength and poyson of the world doth especially consist ?

Teol. In this lyeth a great strength of the world, that it draweth down the stars of heaven, and maketh them fall to the earth, as it is said of the Dragons tayl ; which is ambition, covetousness, and the love of this world. *Rev.* 20. For we may wonder and lament, to see how the love of these things hath wounded and overborn many excellent servants of God, both Preachers and Professors of the Gospel : which thing doth plainly argue the strength of it, for it is the strongest, and the very last engine that Satan useth to impugn us withal, when none other will prevail : For when no temptation could fasten upon Christ, he bringeth forth this last weapon which never faileth, *All these will I give thee ; Mat. 4.* Shewing him the glory of the whole world. So then he (having experience in this, that it never faileth) thought to have overcome Christ himself with it. Here therefore lyeth the very sting and strength of the world and the Devil : for whom hath he not taken with, *All these things will I give thee ?* Whom hath he not wounded ? whom hath he not deceived ? whom hath he not overthrown ? with this he enticed *Balsam* : with this he beguiled *Achan* : with this he overthrew *Juans* : with this

this he bewitched *Demas* : with this in the our days he deceived many of excellent gifts. For assuredly he is a *Phœnix* amongst men which is not overcome with this. He is a wonderment of the World that is not moved with money.

Phil. I am now fully satisfied for this matter. But one thing cometh often into my mind ; to wit that these miserable worldlings can have no sound comfort in their pleasures and profits, because they have no comfort in God, nor peace in their own consciences.

Theol. You say very true. It is impossible that men loving this World, should have any sound comfort in God : For no man can serve two Masters ; both God and riches. Their case is therefore very dangerous and fearful, though they never see it nor feel it : as I will shew you by a plain example : Suppose one of these great rich worldlings should be cloathed in Velvet, and cloath of Gold, in most stately manner, and also should be set at his table, furnished with all the dainties of the world, should be attended and waited upon by many in most lordly & pompous manner, should sit in his goodly dining chamber, all glittering like Gold ; should have his first, second, and third served in with minstrels and Instruments of Musick in most Royal sort, he sitting in his Chair like a King in his Throne ; yet

et for all this, if a dagger should be held to
the heart all this while, ready to stab him, what
pleasure, what joy, what comfort could he
have in all the rest? Even so whatsoever
somp and pleasures wicked worldlings have
ere below, yet their guilty and hellish con-
science is as it were a dagger held always hard
to their heart, so as they can have no sound
comfort in any thing, Or let me give it you
thus: Put case a man hath committed High
Treason, and were therefore apprehended,
arraign'd, and condemn'd to be hang'd, drawn
and quartered; what then can comfort a man
in this case? can mirth, can musick, can gold,
can silver, can lands, can livings? No, no,
none of all these can help him, or give him
any comfort: For the continual thoughts
of death do so grieve him at the heart, that
none of all these can do him any good, or
any whit mitigate his grief. What then
is the thing that can comfort him in this
case? Onely a pardon sealed with the Kings
broad Seal, and subscribed with his own
hand. For as soon as he hath got this,
his heavy heart reviveth, and leapeth for
joy. This then assuredly is the very case
of all prophane Atheists and Worldlings,
who are not assured of the King of Hea-
ven his Pardon for their Sin: and then,
what joy can they have either in their meat,
drink,

drink, goods, cattel, wives, children, land, and revenues, or any thing whatsoever? For the dreadful thoughts of hell do oftentimes cross them inwardly, and quite damp and dash their mirth, their own conscience will not be stilled, but in most terrible manner rise up and give evidence against them, telling them flatly they shall be damned, how merry and joyous soever they seem to be in this world, setting a good face to the matter. For sure it is, that inwardly they have many a cold pull, and many heart-gripes. And all the mirth and jollity is but a giggling from the teeth outward, they can have no sound comfort within. And therefore the wise King saith, *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness*, Prov. 13. Likewise saith the holy man Job, *Terrors of conscience come upon the wicked man like waters: in the night a whirl-wind carrieth him away secretly*, Job 27. 20. Eliphaz the Temanite avoucheth the same poynt, saying, *The wicked man is continually as one that travelles with child: a sound of fear is in his ears*, &c. Job 15. 20. Thus then we see, that howsoever many carnal Atheists, and ungodly persons seem outwardly to float aloft in all mirth and jollity, bearing it out (as we say) at the breast: yet inwardly are they pinched with terrors, and most horrible convulsions of conscience.

Antil.

and Antil. You have spoken many things very
or simply against covetousness, but in my mind, so
crook as a man covers nothing but his own, he can-
not be said to be covetous.

oth Theol. Yes that he may. For not onely is
e he covetous, which greedily desireth other
herens goods; but even he also which over-
aniggardly and pinchingly holdeth fast his
own, and is such a miser that he will part with
nothing that he hath.

col The gripple muck-rakers had as leeve part
ne with their blood as their goods. They will
th pinch their own backs and bellies, to get their
om God into their chests, And when they have
in once got him there, will they easily part with
him, trow yee? No, no: a man will part with
his God for no mans pleasure. He will eat
pease-bread, and drink small drink, rather
then he will deminish his God. Therefore the
Scripture saith, *Eat not the meat of him that
hath an evil eye, and desire not his dainty dishes.
For as he grudges his own soul, so will he say unto
thee, Eat and drink, when his heart is not with
thee. Thou shalt vomit thy morsels which thou
hast eaten, and lose thy pleasant speeches.* Prov.
23. 6. The old saying is, The covetous man
wanteth as well that which he hath, as that
which he hath not; because he hath no use of
that which he hath. So then you see, there
is a great strength of covetousness in the
niggardly

niggardly keeping of our own.

Antil. Yet for all this, men must follow the worldly business, and lay up to live. For it is a hard world, and goods are not easie to come by. Therefore men must ply their business, or else they may go beg and starve.

Theol. I deny not, but that you may follow the works of your calling diligently, so it be in the fear of God, and with a good conscience, as I told you before: but this greediness, and grippleness God doth condemn, and also this excessive love of money.

Antil. Believe me, I know no body that haue it; I cannot see but that all men love gold & silver.

Theol. It is one thing to use these things, and another thing to love them; and set our hearts upon them. For the Scripture saith, If riches increase, set not your hearts upon them. *St. John* also saith, Love not this world, nor the things that are in this world. 1 John 2. He saith not, Use not this world; but, Love not this world: for use it we may; love it we may not. Therefore the Apostle saith, that, The things which use this world, should be as though they used it not. 1 Cor. 7. Where he alloweth a sober and moderate use of the things of this life in the fear of God. We must use this world for necessities sake, as we use meat and drink, taking no more of this world then needs must, for fear of surfeiting. The Holy Ghost saith,

Let

Let your conversion be without covetousness, and be content with things present. Heb. 13. 5. Happy is that man therefore that is well content with his present estate whatsoever, and carrieth himself moderately and comfortably therein. For the SPIRIT saith, *There is no profit to a man under the Sun, but that he eat, drink, and delight his soul with the profit of his labours.* I saw also this, that this is the hand of God. Eccles. 2. 24. In which words, the prudent King saith thus much in effect: That this is all the good we can attain unto in this world, even to take a sober and comfortable use of the things of this life which God bestoweth upon us. And further he avoucheth, *That thus to use them aright, and this is a sound comfort, is a very rare gift of God.* Eccles. 5. 18. 19. For as one saith, *He is a wise man, that is not grieved for the things which he hath not, but doth rejoice in the things which he hath, using them to Gods glory and his own comfort.* [Greg. Nazia.] So then I conclude this point, and return to you an answer, thus: That we may in sober and Godly manner, use gold, silver, and the things of this life: but at no hand to over-love them, or give our hearts unto them.

Antil. Well; yet for all this I cannot see but that these Preachers and Professors, the learned

men and precise fellows, are even as eager of the world, and covetous as any other.

Theol. Now you shew your venomous spirit against better men then your self. And I have a four-fold answer for you. First, I answer, that although godly men may be somewhat over-taken this way, and over-spirit a little, yet they break not out so grossly as others. Secondly, if God leave them sometimes to be overcome of the world; yet he, in his great wisdom and mercy, turneth it to their good. For thereby he first humbleth them, and afterwards raiseth them up again. And so *all things work together for good to them that love God.* Rom. 8. Thirdly, I answer, we must live by rules and not by examples. For even the best of Gods people have had their wants and weaknesses. Therefore we may not frame rules to live by out of the infirmities of the most excellent Servants of God. Wicked therefore and impious is their allegation, who alledge *David's* adultery, *Lot's* drunkenness, *Peter's* fall, *Abraham's* slips, *Solomon's* weakness, &c. for a shelter and defence of themselves in like sins. Lastly, I answer, that you greatly wound your self in your own speech; so far off are you from mending your market any whit thereby. For if Preachers and other Godly men (after many prayers, tears, and much means used) cannot escape scot free,

but sometimes are wounded, and almost over-
thrown by the world and the Devil; what
then shall become of you, which use no means
at all, nor any gain-striving, but willingly give
place to the Devil? If the Devil did over-
master *D vid. Lor, Sampson, Salomon*, and o-
ther such excellent worthies; alas! what shall
become of meer Worldlings and Atheists? If
the most Valiant men, and their Captains in a
battel go down, what shall become of the faint-
hearted Souldiers? And as *St. Peter* saith, *If*
the righteous scarce be saved; where shall the wick-
ed and ungodly appear? 1 Pet. 4. 18. So then I
take you at the rebound, and return your own
weapon upon your self; that such godly men
cannot escape through this world without
blows; what shall become of them that know
not what godliness meaneth?

Antil. Yet I say once againe that men must
live, men must lay up for this world; we cannot
live by the Scripture. And as for that which you
call covetousness; it is but good husbandry.

Theol. I thought we should have it at last.
Now you have paid it home: you are come
to the old byas, and as a hair to her form, and
her old covert. For this is the very covert
and thicker of the world wherein they would
hide Covetousness: but I will do what I
can to hunt you out of it by the Scrip-
tures.

First, *Solomon saith, He that spareth more than is right shall surely come to poversty.* Prov. 11. 24. So then you see, that covetousness bringeth forth poverty. Thus therefore I reason : That which bringeth poverty is no good husbandry : but covetousness and too much sparing bringeth poverty ; therefore it is no good husbandry. The same *Solomon saith, He that is given to gain troubleth his own house.* That is, the covetous man is an occasion of many evils in his Estate & Family. From Scripture I do thus reason : That which troubleth a mans house, is no good husbandry ; but covetousness troubleth a mans house, therefore it is no good husbandry. Last of all, the old Proverb saith, *Covetousness bringeth nothing home :* And therefore it is no good husbandry. For oftentimes we see, that men for Covetousness of more, lose that which otherwise they might have had. One of the wise *Heathen saith, Evil gain is as bad as loss.* [Hesiodus.] But the Covetous man doth seek after wicked gain, and therefore seeketh loss ; and consequently is no good Husband. Another saith, *Unjust gain, bringeth forth loss and misery.* [Phocilipes.] And therefore it is far enough off from Vertue, and a good Husbandry. Thus then I hope you are so hunted both by God and men, that this cover cannot hide you. And therefore you must

Out

out of it, and seek some other shelter : for this will not serve your turn.

Phil. You I must needs say you have fully stopp'd his mouth, and thoroughly ferreted him out of his deep burrow. And it is most certain that you say, that the wise Heavhen hath condemn'd covetousness and all unjust gains ; which we both practise and defend ; and therefore shall they rise up in judgment against us. But now let us leave this caviller, and proceed in our matters. There is one thing yet remaining, wherein I desire to be satisfied

Theol. What is that ?

Phil. I would gladly know which be the special remedies against covetousness.

Theol. There be two special remedies against covetousness : to wit, contentation, and the meditation of Gods providence.

Phil. Let us hear somewhat of contentation out of the Scriptures.

Theol. The Apostle saith, Having food and raiment, we must be therewith content. For we brought nothing into this world : and it is certain we shall carry nothing out. 1 Tim. 6. 8. The Spirit also saith, Let your conversation be without covetousness, & be content with your present state. Heb. 13. 5. The Apostle saith, He had learned in what estate soever he was, therewith to be content. Note, that he saith, he had learned ; for he had it not of himself. For contentation is

the singular gift of God : as it is written, The
 righteous eateth to the contentation of his soul : but
 the belly of the wicked shall want. Prov. 13. 23
 An ancient Father saith, We ought to accustom
 our selves to live of a little, and to be content, that
 we may do no wicked or filthy thing for lucre's sake
 [Cyril. in Joan. 12.] Another saith, He is
 not poor that hath nothing : but he that desires
 much. Neither is he rich that hath much but he
 that wanteth nothing : for contentation never
 wanteth. There is no grief in lacking, but when
 there is immoderate desire of having. If we will
 live after Nature, we shall never be poor : if after
 our own appetite we shall never be rich. [Chrys.
 hom. 51.] Well therefore said the Poet, We are
 not rich unjustly, but justly : Be content with
 thine own things, abstain from other mens. [Eu-
 rip.] Thus then we see, that both God him-
 self (the fountain of all wisdom) and men
 also, both in the state of nature and grace, do
 all joyntly advise us to strive for contentati-
 on : and then we shall have a sovereign re-
 medy against Covetousness.

Phil. Let us hear somewhat of the second re-
 medy against covetousness.

Thou! A earnest thinking upon the Provi-
 dence of God is a present remedy against the
 most foolish and pining carefulness of men for
 this life. For if we would seriously weigh and
 deeply consider the provident care that God
 hath

Hath had for his children in all ages, touching food and rayment, and how strangely he hath provided for them; it might suffice to correct this evil in us, and minister unto us a notable preservative against Covetousness.

We read how wonderfully the Lord did provide for his Prophet *Elijah* in the time of the great drought that was in *Israel*. 1 Kin. 17. Did not the Lord command the Ravens to feed him by the River *Cherish*? Did not the Ravens bring him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening, and he drank of the River?

What should I speak, how miraculously God provided for *Hagar* and her Infant, when they were both cast out of *Abraham's* house, and brought to great extremity; even both of them ready to give up the Ghost for want of food.

Did not God help at a pinch, as his manner hath always been? Did he not send his Angel unto them, and both comfort them, and provide for them? What should I speak how strangely God provided for his Church in the Wilderness? Did he not feed them with Manna from heaven, and gave them water to drink out of a Rock? Hath not our Heavenly Father made many royal and large promises, that he will provide necessities for his children? Shall we not think that he will be as

good as his word? doth he not say, *The Lyons lack and suffer hunger. but they that seek him shall want nothing that is good?* Psal. 34. 10. Doth he not say, *Fear him all ye his Saints for nothing is wanting to them that fear him?* Psal. 84. 11. Doth he not say, *No good thing shall be withheld from them that walk uprightly?* Doth he not say, *Our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of these things, and that all these things shall be cast upon us, if we earnestly seek his Kingdom?* Mat. 6. 33. Did he not bid us, *Cast all our care upon him, for he careth for us?* 1 Pet. 5. 7. Doth he not bid us, *Take no thought what we shall eat, or what we shall drink, or wherewith we shall be clothed?* Luk. 12. Meaning thereby no distracting or distrustful thoughts. Doth he not say, *He will not leave us, nor forsake us?* Heb. 13. 5. Doth he not say, *The Lord is at hand, in nothing be careful?* Phil. 4. 5. Are not these large promises sufficient to stay up our faith in Gods providence? Shall we think God jesteth with us? Oh it were blasphemy once to think it. For God is true, and all men lyers: He is faithful that hath promised. His Word is more then the faith of a Prince; more then ten thousand Obligations. Why then do we not rest upon it? why go we any further? Why do we not take his VVord? VVhy do we not depend wholly upon him? VVhy are we still coverous? VVhy are we still

still distrustful? VVy do we dissemble and deceive? Oh we of little faith! Our Lord Jesus knowing right well the distrustfulness of our nature, and the deep root it hath in us, is not onely content to make these great and Royal promises unto us; which were enough, but also strengtheneth and backeth us with many strong Reasons to support our weakness in this behalf. He therefore bringeth us back to a due consideration of things, *Consider (saith he) the Ravens: consider the fowls of the Heavens: for they neither sow nor reap, nor carry into barns, and yet God feedeth them; they want nothing. Consider the Lillies how they grow, they neither labour nor spin; yet Solomon in all his royalty was not cloathed like one of these.* Luke 12. Oh therefore that we would consider these *Consider*s! Oh that we would consider, that our life is more worth then meat, and our bodies then rayment! Oh that we would consider, that with all our earking and caring we can do no good at all, no not so much as add one Cubit to our Stature! Truly, truly, if we would deeply ponder these Reasons of our Saviour, and apply them to our selves, they might serve for a Bulwark and sure defence against Covetousness. If we would consider how that great King of Heaven, (who hath his way in the VVhirl-wind, and the Clouds

are the dust of his feet) careth for the little Wren and filly Sparrow, how he looketh to them, how he tendereth them, how he provideth for them every day, both breakfast, dinner and supper: it might serve to correct our distrustfulness. For who ever saw these, or any other fowl, starve for hunger? so good a Father, and so good a Nurse have they. And are not we much better then they? Hath not God more care of us, then of them? Yes verily, a thousand times. For he loveth them but for our sakes: how much more then doth he love our selves? Therefore I say again and again, If we would consider these things, & lay them to heart, they would nip covetousness on the head, and drive it quite out of our hearts. Let us consider therefore, that God provided for man before man was: then how much more will he provide for man now that he is? Is he our Father, and will he not provide for us? Is he our King, and will he not regard us? Is he our Shepherd, and will he not look to us? Hath he provided Heaven for us, and will he not give us earth? Hath he given us his Son Christ, and shall he not with him give us all things? Doth he provide for Whoremongers, and will he neglect his chosen? Doth he send his Rain, and cause the Sun to shine upon the unjust, and shall he not upon the Just? Doth he provide for them which
are,

are not of the family, and will he not provide for his own family? Will a man feed his Hogs and not care for his Servants? Or will he care for his servants, and not regard his own children? Oh, then let us consider these Reasons: let us remember, that our Heavenly Father hath as great care for the preservation of his creatures, as once he had for their creation. Let us therefore remember, that he which giveth the day, will provide for us the things of the day. Let us remember, that God always giveth for sustentation, though not for satiety. Let us remember, that God will not forsake the souls of the Righteous. Prov. 10. 38. Let us remember how God never faileth his. For whoever trusted in the Lord, and was confounded?

Phil. What then is the cause that many do want these outward Breasts?

Theol. The cause is in themselves, because they want Faith. For if we had Faith, we could want nothing, For Faith searcheth no things, mine. [Hieron ad Heliodorum. Cyr. in oratione Dominica.] As faith an Ancient, and another faith, For as much as all things are in the hand of God, God can want nothing, if any of the things be wanting unto God. Therefore to have faith is to have all things; for if we have him for our friend, we have enough, we need go no further. For he will make men our friends.

yea, he will make Angels, and all Creatures to be serviceable unto us, he will give them special charge to look to us, to guard us, and to do continual homage unto us. Therefore let us make God our friend, and then have we done all at once, that may concern our good, both for this life and a better. But if he stand not our friend, if we have not him on our side, if he bick us not, then all other things whatsoever can do us no good, all is not worth a button: For, *Quid prodest si omnia habes cum ramen qui omnia deus non habeas?* [August.] What is a man the better, though he have all things, and be without him which is all things, and be without him which is the authour of all things?

Phil. Herein you speak very truly, no doubt. For we see many have great plenty of outward things: but because they have not God, they can have no true comfort in them, or blessing with them. *Thos.* True indeed: For, *Man liveth not by bread alone,* (saith our Lord Jesus) but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, will he. And again he saith, *Though a man have his Son, yet his life consisteth not in the things of us all this.* Luk, 11. For without Gods monger there can be no sound comfort in a: Doth? For some have abundance, yet are vi-thing with continual sicknesses. Some having the dance, pine away with consumptions. Others

thers having abundance, dye of surfeiting. Others are matched away by untimely death, in the midst of all their jollity. Others are visited with great lots both by Sea and by Land. Others are vexed with curst Wives, and disobedient children. Some again commit murthers and treasons, and so loose all at once. Others are wasted and consumed by the secret curse of God, no man knoweth how. Some having great riches, are given over to the murderers, some to the thief, some to the poisoner. The wise King saith, *There is a fore evil, which I have seen under the Sun namely riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.* Eccles. 5. 13.

10 Zaphar also the Naamite, saith, *When the wicked shall have sufficient and enough, he shall be brought into straits. The hand of every troubler shall be upon him. When he shall fill his belly, God will send upon him his fierce wrath, which he shall take upon him in stead of his meat.* Job 20. 22, 23, 24.

Thus then it's cleary, that mans life and outward estate, depends not upon outward things, but onely upon the blessing and providence of God. For, *unhappy is he that maketh riches, which doth bring us ofren with it. For better is it to be just, then great abundance is many of the wicked.* Ps. 37. 16. *Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, then great treasure and trouble therewith. Better is a little with Righteousness,* then

then great revenues without equity, Prov. 16. 8.

Thus then I conclude this point. Man liveth not by bread, but by a blessing on bread, not by outward means, but by a blessing upon means. For how can bread, being a dead thing, and having no life in it self, give life to others?

Phil. I do not well understand the meaning of these words. By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Theol. Thereby is meant the decree, ordinance and providence of God, which upholdeth all things, even the whole order of Nature.

For the Scripture saith, *He spake, and it was done. He commanded, and they were created.* Ps.

33. 9. In which words we plainly see, that God doth but speak, and it is done; he doth command and all creatures are preserved. For God doth all things with a word. He created all things with his word, he preserveth all with his word, he speaketh and it is done. His words are words of power and authority. Whatsoever he saith, whatsoever he calleth for, it must be done presently, without any delay or interposition, withstanding of him. He calleth for famine, and behold famine. He calleth for plenty, and behold plenty. He calleth for pestilence, and behold pestilence. He calleth for the sword, and behold the sword. All Angels, all men, all beasts, all fishes, all fowls, all creatures whatsoever must obey him, and be

at

at his beck. He is the greatest Commander: his Word commandeth Heaven, and Earth, and the Sea; All Creatures must be obedient to his will, and subject to his Ordinance.

This is the cause why all things, both in Heaven, Earth, and the Sea, do keep their immutable and unvariable courses, times and seasons, even because he hath charged them so to do. And they must of necessity always at all times, and forever obey; for the creatures must obey the Creator. This Act of Parliament was made the first Week of the world, and never since was or can be repeated.

Phil. But so call you back again to the point we had in hand. Resolve me I pray you, of this; whether many of the dear children of God do not, in this life, sometimes want outward things, and are brought into great distress.

Theol. Yes certainly. For *Elijah* did want, and was in distress. *1 Kin. 17.* *Paul* did want, and was in many distresses. *2 Cor. 1. 8.* The Holy Christians mentioned in the *Hebrews* did want, and were in marvellous distresses. *2 Cor. 11. 25.* Many of Gods dear ones have in all ages wanted, and at this day also do want, and are greatly distressed. *Heb. 11. 36.* Howsoever Gods children may want, and be low brought, yet they are never utterly forsaken, but are holpen even in greatest extremities.

To this point most notably speaketh the Apostle,

Apostle, saying, *We are afflicted on every side, but yet we despair not : we are persecuted, but not forsaken : cast down, but we perish not.* 2 Cor. 4. 8. The Prophet Jeremiah also saith, *The Lord will not forsake for ever : but though he send affliction, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies : For he doth not punish willingly, nor from his heart, nor afflict the children of men.* Lam. 3. The Kingly Prophet saith, *Surely the Lord will not fail his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.* Psal. 94. 14. The Lord himself saith, *For a moment in mine anger I hid my face from thee, but with everlasting mercy have I had compassion on thee.* Isa. 55. 8. So then we may fully assure our selves, and even write of it, (as a most undoubted and unsealed truth) that Gods children shall never utterly be forsaken in their troubles.

Phil. *With the care and providence of God is so great for his children as you have largely declared : what then, I pray you, is the cause why God suffereth in his to be brought into so many troubles and necessities ?*

Theol. *Their profit and benefit is the cause, and not their hurt. For he loveth them, when he smiteth them. He favoureth them, when he seemeth to be most against them. He aimeth at their good, when he seemeth to be most angry with them. He woundeth them, that he may*

may them. He presseth them that he may ease them. He maketh them cry, that afterward they may laugh. He always meaneth well unto them, he never meaneth hurt. He is most constant in his love towards them. If he bring them into necessities, it is but for the tryal of their faith, love, patience and diligence in prayer.

If he cast them into the fire, it is not to consume them; but to purgo and refine them. If he bring them into great dangers it is but to make them call upon him more earnestly for help and deliverance.

He presseth us, that we may cry: we cry, that we may be heard: we are heard, that we might be delivered. So that here is no hurt done: we are worse scarred then hurt.

Even as the Mother, when her child is wayward, threatneth to throw it to the Wolf, or scareth it with a Bul-begger, to make it cling more unto her, and be quiet: So the Lord oftentimes sheweth us the terrible faces of troubles and dangers, to make us cleave and cling faster unto him, and also teach us to esteem better of his gifts, when we enjoy them, and to be more thankful for them; as health, wealth, peace, liberty, safety, &c. Here is nothing meant on Gods part but good: *All things work together for good, to them that love God.* Rom. 8. For, even the afflictions of Gods children

children are so sanctified unto them by the Spirit, that thereby they are made partakers of the holiness of God: thereby they enjoy the quiet fruit of righteousness: thereby they attain unto a greater measure of joy in the Holy Ghost: thereby the world is crucified to them; and they to the world: thereby they are made comfortable to the death of Christ: thereby they are kept from the condemnation of the World: thereby they learn experience, patience, hope, &c. So that things considered, Gods children are no losers by their afflictions, but gainers. It is better for them to have them, then to be without them: they are very good for them. When Gods children are chastised, it is as it should be. For to them the Cross is mercy and loss is gain. Afflictions are their schooling, and their adversity their best University. *It is good for me* (saith the holy man of God) *that I have been afflicted, that I might learn wisdom.* Psalm 119. By his afflictions therefore he learned much, & became a good Scholar in Gods Book, and well seen in his Statutes and Laws. He grew to great wisdom and judgement by his chastisements. All things turned about in Gods merciful Providence, to his ever lasting comfort. For I say again and again, that all things tend to the good of Gods chosen people. And therefore that estate which

God will have his children to be in, is always best for them : because he who can best discern what is best ; seeth it to be best for them ; whether it be sickness or health, poverty or plenty, prison or liberty, prosperity or adversity. For sometimes sickness is better for us then health, and poverty then plenty. Are therefore the Children of God sick ? It is best for them. Are they poor ? It is best for them. Are they in any trouble ? It is best for them ; because their good Father will turn it to the best. He will oftentimes cut us short of our lusts and desires, because he seeth we will bane our selves with them, he in fatherly care will take the knife from us, because he seeth we will hurt our selves with it. He will keep us short of health and wealth, because he knoweth we will be the worse for them. He will not give us too much ease and prosperity in this world ; for he knoweth it will poison us. He will not allow us continual rest, like standing ponds ; for then he knoweth we will gather scum and filth. He dealeth fatherly and mercifully with us in all things ; even then seeking our greatest good, when we think he doth us most harm.

And to speak all in a Word : he bringeth us into troubles and straits to this end especially, that he may hear of us. For he right well knoweth our nature, he is well acquainted with

with our disposition ; he knoweth we will not come at him but when we stand in need of him ; we care not for him so long as all goeth well with us. But if we come into distress or want any thing that we faine would have then he is sure to hear of us, as he saith by the Prophet, *In their affliction they will seek me early.* Hos. 5. 15.

And another Prophet saith, *Lord, in trouble have they visited thee : they poured out a Prayer when thy chastisement was upon them.* Isa. 26. 16. So then now, I hope you do plainly see the cause why the Lord bringeth his children into so many troubles and necessities.

Phil. I do see it indeed, and am very well satisfied in it. But yet let me ask you one thing further : Are Gods children always sure to be delivered out of their troubles ?

Theol. Yes verily : and (out of doubt) insofar as God seeth good for them: For it is written, *Great are the troubles of the righteous : but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.* Psal. 34. 19. St. Peter saith, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation,* 2 Pet. 2. 9. It is said of Joseph being in prison, *That when his appointed time was come and the counsel of the Lord had tried him, the King ent and loosed him, the Ruler of the People delivered him,* Psal. 105. 19. 20. And again the Scripture saith, *The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth them, and delivereth*

will deliver them out of all their troubles. The Angel of the Lord carrieth round about them that feare him, and delivereth them. Psal. 34. 17. And in another place, the Lord himself saith, concerning the righteous man. Because he hath loved me therefore I will deliver him. I will exalt him, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me in trouble, and I will hear him, I will be with him in trouble: I will deliver him, and glorifie him, Psal. 91. 17. So also saith Eliphaz the Temanite, He shall deliver thee in six troubles, and in the seventh the evil shall not touch thee, Job 5. Come, my People, saith the Lord, Enter thou into my Chambers, and shut the doors after thee: hide thy self for a very little while, until the indignation pass over. Isa. 26. 20. And the Prophet saith, Upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and it shall be holy: and the house of Jacob shall possess their hereditary Possessions. [Obad. 17.] Almost innumerable places of the Scriptures might be adduced to this purpose; but these may suffice. Therefore let us know for a certainty, that so sure as troubles and afflictions are to the children of God, so sure also is deliverance out of the same. As we may write of the one, and make reckoning of it, as sure as the coat on our back; so may we also in Gods good time, write of the other, and make full account of it, as sure as the Lord is true.

Abraham

Abraham was in trouble, but delivered. *Job* in trouble, but delivered. *David* in great trouble, but delivered. The three children in the furnace, but delivered. *Daniel* in the Lyons Den, but delivered. *Jonas* in the Whales belly, but delivered. *Paul* in innumerable troubles, but delivered out of all.

Phil. All this being true that you say, it followeth, that Gods children are chastised only for their good, and ever more sure of deliverance in his appointed time. Which thing being so, we thinke there is no cause at all why they should be so over heavy, or too much cast down in their afflictions.

Theol. Assuredly there is no cause at all, but rather cause why they should rejoyce, clap their hands and sing care away. For can a Father forsake his Children? a King his Subjects? a Master his servant, or a Shepherd his Sheep? Doth not *Jehovah* say, *I will not leave thee nor forsake thee?* Heb. 13. Doth not our Heavenly Father know we have need of these things? Hath not God given us his Word, that we shall not want outward things? Hath he not said, they shall be cast upon us? Why then should we be dismayed? Why should we hang down our heads? Why do we not pluck up good hearts, and be of good cheer? God is our dear Father; he is our best friend; he is our daily Benefactor; he keepeth us at his own cost & charges, he grudgeth

For nothing, he thinketh nothing too much for us; he loveth us most dearly; he is most dear and tender over us; he cannot endure the wind should blow upon us; he will have us want nothing that is good for us. If we will eat gold we shall have it. He hath given us his faithful promise, that as long as we live, we shall never want. Let us therefore rejoyce & be merry. For Heaven is ours, earth is ours, God is ours, Christ is ours, all is ours; as the Apostle saith, *All is yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is Gods.* 1 Cor. 3. 22. The World clap their hands, and crow long before it be day, saying, All is theirs, but the children of God may say, and say truly, All is ours. For they have a true title and proper interest through Christ, in all the Creatures. Many are their priviledges, great are their prerogatives; they are free of Heaven, and earth. They are the onely Denizons of the World: Christ hath purchased them their freedom: Christ hath made them free, & therefore they are free indeed. They are free from sin, free from hell, free from damnation. They are at peace with God, Men and Angels; they are at peace with themselves: They are at peace with all creatures; They are young Princes; Angels fellows, descended of the highest house, of the blood Royal of Heaven, States of Paradise, and Heirs apparent to the immortal Crown.

Crown. Therefore God hath commanded his Angels to guard them, being such young Princes as they are: yea, he hath given a very straight charge to all his Creatures, to look to them, to see to them that they want nothing, that they take no hurt: So jealous, so chary, so tender, is he of them. The Angel must comfort *Jacob*. *Gen.* 32. 12. The Whale must rescue *Jonas*. *Jonah* 2. The Raven must feed *Elias*. *1 King.* 17. The Sun and Moon must stay for *Joshua*. *Jos.* 10. The Sea must divide it self, that *Moses* and his people may pass thorow. *Exod.* 14. The fire must not burn the three children: The Lyons may not devour *David*. *1 Sam.* 17. 3. & 6. All the creatures must change their nature, rather then Gods children should not be holpen and delivered. Oh therefore how great is the happiness of Gods chosen! Who can express it? Who can utter it? They know not their own happiness: It is hid from them. Afflictions do cloud it: Troubles do overflow it: Crosses do dim it. And there is an interposition of the earth betwixt their light and it. But this is most certain and sure, that the best is behind with the children of God; all the sweet is to come; their happiness doth not appear in this world. Their life is hid with Christ in God, *1 Joh.* 3. 21. When Christ shall appear, then shall they also appear with him in glory. It doth not yet appear what

what they shall be ; but when he cometh, they shall be made like unto him. Col. 3. 3. 4. Their names are already taken, and entred into the book of life, and one day they shall be crowned. One day it shall be said unto them, *Come ye blessed, &c.* One day they shall enjoy his presence, where is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there is pleasures for evermore, Ps. 16. Therefore let all Gods secret ones rejoyce, sing and be merry. For howsoever in this world they be contemned, troden under foot ; made nobodies, and walk as shadows ; being counted as the very rags of the earth, and the objects of the world ; yet the time will come, when their happiness and felicity shall be such as never entred into the heart of man : it is endless, unspeakable, and unconceivable.

Phil. I do now plainly see, that there is no cause why Gods people should be too heavy and dumpeish in their afflictions. I see, that though they be not free from all afflictions, yet are they free from all hurtful afflictions. For no rod, no cross, no chastisement, is hurtful unto them, but all, in the conclusion, cometh to a blessed issue.

Theol. You have uttered a great and a most certain truth. For trust in Gods mercy firmly, and carry his good pleasure obediently, and it hath a most blessed and a comfortable end. Therefore the people of God may well be merry in the midst of their sorrows.

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They may with patience and comfort submit themselves to their Fathers corrections, taking them patiently, and even kissing his holy Rod, and saying in themselves, Sith my Father will have it so, I am content, seeing it is his mind, I am willing withal. As old *Eli* said, *It is the Lord, let him do what he will*, 1 Sam. 3. 18. And as *David* in like submission, said in a certain case, *Behold, here am I: let him do to me as it seemeth good in his own eyes*. 2 Sam. 15, 26. And again he saith, *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth; because thou Lord hast done it*, Psal. 39. 9. Behold here then the patience of Gods Saints, and their humble submission unto his most holy will. They know all shall end well, and that maketh them glad to think of it. I conclude then, that the Children of God are happy in what state soever they are; happy in trouble, happy out of trouble; happy in poverty, happy in plenty; blessed in sickness, blessed in health; blessed at home likewise, and abroad; and every way blessed. But on the contrary, the wicked are cursed in what state soever they are, cursed in sickness, cursed in health; cursed in plenty, cursed in poverty; cursed in prosperity, cursed in adversity; cursed in honour, cursed in dishonour. For all things work together for their destruction. Nothing doth them any good. They are not any the better, either for Gods mercies or
judg-

judgments. All weathers are alike unto them. They are always the same, in prosperity and adversity; they are no changlings. And as we say, A good year doth not mend them, nor an ill year pair them.

Phil. You have long insisted upon this point. Now proceed to the fourth sign of a man's damnation, which is the contempt of the Gospel, and lay open both the greatness of the sin, and the danger of it.

Theol. This sin is of another nature then the former. It is a sin against the first Table. It toucheth the person of God himself. For to contemn the Gospel; it is to contemn God himself whose Gospel it is. If to contemn the Ministers of the Gospel, be to contemn God and Christ, *Luk. 10. 16.* (as our Lord Jesus avoucheth) how much more then to contemn the Gospel its self? Therefore it is dangerous meddling with this sin. It is to meddle with edged tools, to meddle with Princes matters, to touch the Ark, to come near the holy Mountain, all which were things full of great peril and danger. Yea, it is to spill the Sacrament. It is *Noli me tangere*: It is not to rail at a King. It is to spit God in the face. It is high treason against the King of Glory. Therefore this sin, of all other, can never be endured, and may at no hand be born withal. For can a mortal King endure the contempt of his Laws? Can he put up the contempt of his own person? Can

he abide any to spet at his Scepter, or to throw a stone at it? No surely he will not. Therefore the Holy Ghost saith, *He that despiseth Moses's Law, dyeth without mercy, under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be worthy, which treadeth under foot the Son of God, and counteth the blood of the Testament as an unholy thing (wherewith he was sanctified) and doth despise the Spirit of Grace?* Heb. 10. 28. And again, *If they were punished which obey not the word spoken by Angels, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?* Heb. 2. 2, 3. *If they escape not, which refused him that spake on earth, how shall we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven?* Heb. 12. 25. Therefore our Saviour Christ saith, *That it shall be easier for Sodom in the day of judgment, then for the contemners of the Gospel.* Luk. 10. 12.

Moreover he saith, *The Queen of the South shall rise up in iudgement against all froward despisers of his Word.* For she came from the uttermost parts of the earth, to hear the wisdom of Solomon: and behold, a greater then Solomon is here. Mat. 12. 42. For Christ is greater then Solomon: his doctrine and wisdom far more excellent. And therefore their sin is the greater which condemn it. The Spirit saith, *He that despiseth the word, shall be destroyed.* St. Peter also telleth us, that the old world, and men of the first

first age, are now in hell-fire, because they both despised, and were disobedient to the doctrine of Christ; 1 Pet. 3. 19. Which (though not personally, yet in his divine Spirit) he spake by Noah, 1 Pet 3 20. So then we see clearly, God will never take it at our hands, that his glorious Gospel should be so universally and openly contemned as it is.

Phil. You have spoken most truly, and also shewed it out of the Scriptures that the contempt of the Gospel is a most heinous sin, yet for all that, it is most lamentable to consider, how little men esteem it, and how light they make of it. Many regard it no more than an egg-shell, they think it not worth a galley half-penny; they will not go to the door to hear it; they take it to be a breath from us, and a sound to them, and so the matter is ended.

They esteem it but as a noise, or empty sound in the air; or as a voice afar off, that a man understandeth not; they never felt the power of it in their hearts: Therefore they prefer their Sheep, their Farms, their Oxen, their Profits, their Pleasures, yea, every thing before it: they know it not to be any such precious jewel, as it is. Although our Lord Jesus himself compare it to a hid treasure, and a most precious pearl, yet these filthy swine of the world tread it under feet, for they know not the price of it. Though Solomon the wise saith, All the merchandize of gold and silver, pearl, and precious stones, are not

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to be compared to it; yet these beasts, these dogs, and hogs of the world, contemn it. They esteeme it more then Christ's most glorious Gospel.

They are like Esops Cock, which made more account of a Barley-corn, than all the precious stones in the world; they are like little children, that esteeme their rattle more than a bag of gold; they are like the Gadarens, which esteemed their hogs more than Christ and his Gospel; they make nothing of it: they think it not worth the while. Many of them sit idle in the streets, even upon the Sabbaths; while the Gospel is preached in their Churches, many are at Cards and Tables in the Ale houses. Many on the Sabbath sleep upon their beds all the Sermon while in the afternoon. Many will hear a Sermon in the forenoon, and they take that to be as much as God can require at their hands, and that he is somewhat beholden to them for it; but as for the afternoon, they will hear none: Then they will to Bowls or Tables. These men serve God in the forenoon, and the Devil in the afternoon. Some run after Whores and Harlots on the Sabbath, some run to Dancing and Bear baiting, some sit upon their Stalls, some sit in their Shops, some by the Fire-side, some sit idle in the Streets, some go to the Stool ball, and others look on. O miserable Wretches! O cursed Carriffs! O monstrous Hell-hounds, which so grossly and openly contemn the Gospel of Christ! What will become of them in the end? Assuredly their dam-

damnation sleepeth not. A thousand deaths wait for them; they lie open on all sides to the wrath of God. And we may wonder at his marvellous patience, that he doth not throw down balls of wild-fire from Heaven to consume and burn up both them and their shops and houses, and even make them spectacles of his vengeance, for so notorious contempt of such sacred, holy and high things.

Theol. You have spoken very truly, zealously and religiously; and I do greatly commend you for it. And I must needs affirm the same things, for they cannot be denied, and for mine own part, I think the Gospel was never so openly contemned in any Age (of a people living under the profession of it, and under a godly and Christian Prince) as it is in this Age. For howsoever some make a shew of Religion, yet they have denied the power thereof. They turn the Grace of God into wantonness, as St. Jude saith, Jude 4. They make the Gospel a cloak for their sins. They receive it, and embrace it, as it will best stand with their profits and pleasures, their lusts and likings, their credits and policies, and not a jot further. They will practise it at their pleasure. *These men profess they know God: but by their works they deny him, and are abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate.* Tit. I. 16. This age is full of such carnal Protestants.

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Phil. This age indeed aboundeth with many hollow-hearted hypocrites, dissemblers, and time-servers, which howsoever they make a face, and bear a countenance, as though they loved the Gospel, yet their heart is not with it. Their heart is with Atheism, their heart is with Popery, they have a Pope in their belly: they be Church-Papists. Howsoever, now and then they come to the Church, and bear a Sermon, and shew a good countenance to the Preacher, yet their heart goeth after covetousness. The Lord complaineth of this by the Prophet, saying, This people will sit before thee, and hear thy words: but they will not do them. Ezek. 33. 32. For with their mouths they make jests: and their heart goes after covetousness. God complaineth of this also by the Prophet Jeremiah, saying, Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and stand before me in this house, whereupon my name is called, and say, we are delivered, though we have done all these abominations? Is this house become a den of thieves, whereupon my name is called? Whereupon my Name is called? Where we see how the Lord doth chide his people, and sharply reprove them for abusing of his Temple, worship and sacrifices, making them a cloak for their sins: and making his house a den of thieves, which should be an assembly of Saints. Now all this is a lively description of our time, wherein many use the exercises of the Word, Prayer, and Sacraments, not to kill

kill and mortifie sin, but to nourish and shelter their sins. For they blindly imagine, that if they come to the Church, and pray, and hear the Sermon, they are discharged of their sins, though they leave them not. They imagine they have given God his full due; and that therefore they may be the more bold to sin afterward. These kind of hypocrites are like rogues which use medicines not to cure sores, but to make sores. These are like the Papists, which think if they hear Mass in the morning, they may do what they list all the day after.

Theol. I see now you have very well profited in the knowledge of God and true Religion. You have spoken soundly, and like a man of knowledge in Gods matters. For the common sort of people think indeed, that all Religion consisteth in the outward service of God, though their hearts be far from him. To whom God may justly say, *This people draweth near me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me,* Mat. 15. 8. Of whom also God may justly take up all his just complaints of his people *Israel* and *Judah*, which are so frequent in all the Prophets: to wit, that he did abhor their sacrifices, loathe their oblations, detest their incense, despise their New-Moons, &c. Isa. 66. Accounting them all but as Mans Blood, Dogs Blood, Swines Blood; and all because their hands were full of Blood; because they executed not Justice and Ju-
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Judgement in the gate ; because they were not obedient to his will : because their hearts were not with him ; because they used, rather abused all these things as shelters for their sins.

Phil. The great contempt of the Ministers the Gospel in this age doth strongly argue the contempt of the Gospel itself. For a man cannot love the Gospel, and hate the faithful Ministers thereof. But we see by lamentable experience, that the most grave, godly, and learned Ministers are had in derision of very base and vile persons. And as Job saith, They whose Fathers I have refused to see with the dogs of my flocks, they were the children of fools, and the children of villains, which were more vile then the earth. For now every rascal dares scoff and scorn at the most grave and ancient Fathers and Pastors of the Church, dares flout them as they walk in the streets, and as they ride by the high-ways. And though the Holy Ghost giveth them glorious and lofty titles, (as the Stewards of Gods own house, disposers of his secrets, disbursers of his treasure, keepers of the broad seal, keepers of the keys of heaven, Gods Secretaries, Gods Ambassadors, Angels ; yea, the very glory of Christ : and all this to express the excellency of their calling) yet these vile varlets and venomous vermine of the earth, dare call them proud Prelates, pild Parsons, pelting Priests. O monstrous and intollerable impiety ! Now it is
come

come to pass, that this most sacred Function (which is glorious in the sight of God and his Angels, and in it self most honourable) is had in greatest contempt of all callings. For now the earth is full of rank Atheists, and many Gods, which scoff at the Gospel, and beat out their tongues at all religions. These kind of Fellows never dissemble for the matter, they make no shew at all, they are no hypocrites, they hide not their sins, but declare them openly like Sodom. They care not if they never come to the Church; they are too full of it. They live like brute beasts. They think the Scriptures are but fables. They rail at the Ministers and Preachers; they make flat opposition against them, and are notorious mockers and past graces.

Of such the Apostle St. Peter foretold, That in the last days should come mockers, and such as would live after their own lusts, &c. Of such, a Godly writer saith, *Verbum Dei secure contemnitur, promissiones inanes esse creduntur, minæ pro fabulis habentur*: That is, The Word of God is carelessly contemned; his promises are counted vain and his threatnings fables. Of such, the poet saith:

*Hæu! vivunt homines tanquam mors nulla se-
Aut velut infernus fabula vana foret.* (quæritur)
Alas! men live as they should never die;
Or as though speech of hell were a stark lie.

Now is a'fo the time, wherein the world swarmeth with Papists and Atheists; and most

For now Religion is hated, true Godliness
 spised, Zeal abhorred, Sincerity scoffed,
 Uprightness loathed, Preacheers contemned,
 Professors disdained, and almost all good men
 had in derision. For now we may justly com-
 plain with the Prophet, *Judgment is turned
 backward, and justice standeth afar off: Truth
 is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter.*
*Yea, truth faileth, and he that restraineth from
 evil, maketh himself a prey.* The Prophet Mi-
 cab bewailth the times, saying, *The good man
 is perished out of the earth, and there is none right-
 eous among men. They all lie in wait for blood;
 every man hunteth his neighbour with a net,* Mic.
 7. 2. The Prophet Jeremiah complaineth of
 the same evil in his time; namely, that the
 people were come to be past shame in sinning;
*Were they ashamed (saith he) when they had
 committed abomination? Nay, they were not asha-
 med, neither could they have any shame,* Jer. 8. 12.
 This is a lively picture, and a very counter-
 pane of our time: For now we have put on a
 brow of brass; we are become impudent in
 sin. We cannot blush, we cannot be ashamed.
 We are almost past shame, and past grace. O
 Lord, what will this gear grow to in the end!

Phil. We may justly fear some great judgment
 of God to be near unto us: Yea, even to hang o-
 ver our heads. For the Lord will never leave the
 contempt of his Gospel and his Ministry unpun-
 ished.

T heol.

Theol. You have spoken a truth; and we have heard before how the old World was plagued for it. And we read how grievously the *Jews* were afflicted by the *Romans* for this sin: As our Lord Jesus did plainly fore-tell. We read also, that after the Lord had preached the Gospel himself, and spread it abroad by his Apostles, conquering the World thereby, (which thing was signified by the white Horse, his Rider, his Bow, and his Crown) and yet shortly after, saw that the same began to be contemned in the world, and made light of; then he did in most fearful manner plague the earth with Wars, Blood-sheddings, Tumults, Dearth, Famine, and Pestilence: which are all signified by the Red-horse, the Black-horse, and the Pale-horse, which did appear at the opening of the second, third, and fourth Seal. So likewise undoubtedly, God will severely punish all injuries, wrongs and contempts done to his faithful Embassadors, as appeareth, *Rev.* 11. 5. where it is set down, That, *If any would hurt the two witnesses with their two Olives, and two Candlesticks, (whereby is signified the faithful preachers of the Gospel, with all the Spiritual treasures and Heavenly light) Fire should proceed out of their mouths, and devour their adversaries: That is, The fire of Gods wrath should consume all that had oppressed them, either by Mocks,*
flouts

flouts, railings, slanders, imprisonment, or any
 other kind of indignity. Of this we have a
 plain example or two in the Scripture. First,
 we read how fire came down from heaven, &
 consumed the contemptuous Captain and his
 fifty, at the threatening and calling for of *Elijah*.
2 King. 1. 10. 2ly, How two bears came out
 of the Forrest, and tare in pieces two and forty
 yonkers which mocked *Elisba*, the Prophet of
 God calling him bald-head, bald-head. *2 King.*
2. 24. So then by these examples it is mani-
 fest, that howsoever the Lord may wink at
 these things for a time, and make as though he
 saw them not, yet the time will come, when he
 will rain fire & brimstone upon all the scoffers
 of his faithful Ministers, and contemners of his
 Gospel. All this is declared in the first chap.
 of the *Proverbs* of *Solomon*, where is shewed
 how the wisdom of God, even Jesus Christ the
 highest wisdom, doth cry aloud all abroad in
 the world, and manifest himself in the open
 streets; but yet is contemned of wicked world-
 lings, and scoffing fools. Therefore saith Christ,
Because I have called, & ye refused, I have stretch-
ed out my hand, but none would regard: ye have
hated knowledge, and despised all my counsel; there-
fore I will laugh at your destruction, and mock
when your fear cometh upon you, like a sudden de-
solation; and your destruction like a whirl-wind.
Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer,
they

they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me. Prov. 1.24,25. Herein then we see his terrible wrath and vengeance, threatned from heaven against all prophane contemners of Christ and his everlasting Gospel, or any of the faithful publishers and Proclaimers thereof. Behold therefore, ye despisers, and wonder : consider well what will become of you in the end. Do not think that the most just God will always put it up at your hands, that ye should so manifestly condemn both his Word, and most zealous Preachers, and professors thereof. No, no : assure your selves, he will be even with you at last. He will smite you both sideling and overthwart : he will dog you and pursue you with his judgements, and never leave following the chase with you, till he hath destroyed you, and consume you from off the face of the earth. For remember, I pray you, what he saith in Deuteronomy, *If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold of judgement, I will execute vengeance on mine enemies, and I will reward them that hate me : I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall eat the flesh of mine adversaries.* Deut. 32.41,42.

Phil. Truly, Sir, we may justly fear, that for our great contempt of the Gospel, and general coldness, both in the profession and practice thereof, God will take it from us, and give it to a people that will bring forth the fruit thereof.

Theol.

Theol. We may well fear indeed, lest for our sins, especially our loathing of the heavenly *Manna*, the Lord remove our candlestick, take away our silver Trumpets, let us no more hear the sweet Bells of *Aaron*, cause all *Viss* on to fail, and our Sabbath to cease, and bring upon us that most grievous and sore Famine of not hearing the Word of the Lord, spoken of by *Amos* the Prophet, *Amos* 8. 11. Then shall our *Halcyon* days and golden years, be turned into weeping, mourning, and lamentation. God for his infinite mercy sake, turn it away from us.

phil. Amen, Amen; and let us all pray earnestly, night and day, that those fearful Judgments may, according to Gods infinite mercy be held back, which our sins do continually cry for; and that his most glorious Gospel may be continued to us and our posterity, even yet with greater success.

Asun. No doubt it is a very great sin to despise the Word of God; and I think there is none so bad that will do it. For we ought to love Gods Word, God forbid else. He that loveth not Gods Word, it is a pity he liveth.

Theol. These are but words of course: It is an easie matter to speak good words: and very many will say as you say. But both you and they in your practise, do plainly shew that you make no reckoning of it, you esteem it no more then a disclout. I think, if the mat-

ter

t for were well tried, you have scant a Bible in
ven- our House. But though you have one, it is ma-
ick, nest that you seldom read therein with any
ore re or conscience and as seldom hear the
tifi Word preached. How else could you be so
ing ignorant as you are?

ne Afun. *I grant that I and some others are some-
en hat negligent in the hearing and reading of the
e Word of God; but you cannot say therefore we do
contemn it.*

Theol. Yes verely: your continual negligence
and carelesness doth argue a plain contempt.
Sure it is, you have no appetite nor stomach
to the holy Word of God. You had rather do
any thing, then either read or meditate in it:
it is irksome unto you; you read not two chap-
ters in a week. All holy exercises of Religion
are most bitter and tedious unto you: they are
as Vineger to your teeth, and smoak to your
eyes. The immoderate love of this world, and
of vanity, hath took away your appetite from
all heavenly things. And whereas you shift it
off with negligence, as though that would ex-
cuse you; the Apostle hits you home, when he
saith, *How shall we escape if we neglect so great
salvation?* Mark, what he saith, *If we neglect.*

Antil. *Belike you think men have nothing else to
do, but to read the Scriptures, and hear Sermons.*

Theol. I do not say so: I do not say you
should do nothing else. For Go doth allow you
with a good conscience, and in his fear, to

follow the works of your calling, as hath been said before. But this I condemn in you and many others, that you will give no time to private prayers, reading and meditation in Gods Word, neither morning nor evening; neither before your business, nor after. And although you have often vacant time enough, yet you will rather bestow it in vanity, and idle prating, and gossiping, then in any good exercise of Religion. Which doth plainly shew, that you neither delight in holy things, neither is there any true fear of God before your eyes.

Antil. I tell you plainly we must tend our business, we may go beg else, we cannot live by the Scriptures. If we follow Sermons, we shall never thrive. *What do you think every man is bound to read the Scriptures? Have we not our five wits? Do we not know what we have to do? You would make Fools of us belike. But we are neither drunk nor mad.*

Theol. That every man (of what condition soever) is bound in conscience to hear and read the Word of God, hath been shewed and proved in the beginning of our conference. For all the wit, reason, and understanding of natural men, in Gods matters is but blindness and meer foolishness. The Apostle saith, That the wisdom of the most wise in this world, is not only foolishness with God, but indeed very enmity against God. 1 Cor. 3. 19. And again he saith, That

That, the natural man (with all his five wits) understandeth not the things of the spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. 2.

14. Most prudently to this point speaketh Elibu, saying, There is a spirit in man, but the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding. Job 32. 8.

Antil. I understand not these Scriptures which you alledge; they do not sink into my head.

Theol. I think so indeed: for the Holy Ghost saith, Wisdom is too high for a fool, Prov. 24. 17.

Antil. What, do you call me fool? I am no more fool than your self.

Theol. I call you not fool: but I tell you what the Scripture saith; which calleth all men (though otherwise never so wise, politick and learned) very fools, till they be truly enlightened and inwardly sanctified by the Spirit of God: as appeareth, Tit 3. 3 where the Apostle affirmeth, that both *Titus* and himself, before they received the illuminating Spirit of Gods grace, were very fools, without wit, and without all sense in Gods matters.

Phil. I pray you, good Mr. Theologus, let him alone; for he will never have done cavilling. I see he is a notable caviller. Let us therefore proceed to speak of the fifth sign of condemnation, which is swearing.

Theol. It may well indeed be called a sign of condemnation. For I think it more then a sign.

sign, it is indeed an evident demonstration of a Reprobate. For I never knew any man truly fearing God in his heart, that was an usurer and a common swearer.

Phil. *I am flat of your mind for that. For it cannot be, that the true fear of God and ordinary swearing should dwell together in one man, for swearing is a thing forbidden by a flat statute. And God addeth a sore threat to his Law, that he will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain; but will most sharply and severely punish that man.*

Theol. You say true. And God saith moreover, That if we do not fear and dread his glorious and fearful Name **J EHOVAH**, he will make our plagues wonderful, *Deut. 28. 38.* He saith also by his Prophet *Malachy*, That he will be as a swift witness against swearers, *Mal. 3. 5.* The Prophet *Zachary* saith, That the flying Book of Gods curse and vengeance shall enter into the house of the swearer, and he shall be cut off, *Zach. 5. 4.*

Therefore let all swearers take heed, and look to themselves in time.

Phil. *These threatnings being so great and grievous, and that from the God of heaven himself, a man would think it should cause mens hearts to quake and tremble, and make them afraid to rap out such oaths as they do, if they were not altogether hardened, past feeling, and past grace.*

Theol.

Theol. True indeed, but yet we see by lamentable experience how men are given over both to swear and for-swear : for at this day there is no sin more common amongst us, than swearing ; for many there be, which cannot speak ten words, but one shall be an oath. And numbers have got such a wicked custome of swearing, that they can by no means leave it, no more then a Black-moor can change his skin or a Leopard his spots : for it is made natural unto them through custome, and they have got the habit of it. I do verily think, if it were high treason to swear, yet some could not leave swearing. And sure I am (as light as we make of it) that it is high treason against the Crown of Heaven : yea, it is a sin immediately against God, even against his own person : and therefore he hath forbidden it in the first Table of his Law.

Phil. *Questionless this vice of swearing is, of all other sins most rife in this Land. For you shall have little boys and children in the streets, rap out oaths in most fearful manner. It would make a hearts quake to hear them. We may think, they have sucked them out of their mothers breasts : but sure we are, they have learned them from the evil example of their Parents. And now adays we cannot almost talk with a man, but (in ordinary speech) he will belch out one or another.*

Theol. I will tell you a strange thing ; and with

with great grief I speak it, I do verily thinke there are sworn in this Land an hundred thousand oaths every day in the year.

Phil. No doubt, Sir, you are within compass. For now almost so many men, so many oaths; excepting some few in comparison. Nay, I know divers of mine own experience, which if they be kept in talk, will swear every day in the year an hundred oaths for their parts.

Theol. O what a lamentable thing is it, we may well take up the old complaint of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, who saith, that in his time, The Land did mourn because of oaths, *Jer. 23. 10.* And we may well wonder that the Land sinketh not because of oaths. For if God were not a God of infinite patience, how could he indure his most sacred and glorious Name to be so many thousand times blasphemed in one day, and that by such miserable wretches as we be!

Phil. We may indeed admire and wonder at the patience and long-suffering of God, that he spareth us so long, and giveth us so large a time for repentance. But sure it is, that the Prophet saith, That howsoever the Lord is slow to anger, yet he is great in power, and will not surely clear the wicked, *Nah. 1. 3.* Though he may wink at their monstrous oaths for a time, yet he forgetteth them never a whit, but scoreth them up, and registreth them in his Book of Accounts: so as they stand in record

cord against them. And when the great day of reckoning shall come, he will set them all in order before them, and lay them to their charge.

Let not the wicked swearers and blasphemers hereof, think that they shall scape scot-free, because God letteth them alone a while, & deferreth their punishment. For the longer God deferreth, the more terrible will his strokes be when they come. The longer an arrow is held in a bow, the stronger will be the shot when it cometh forth. Though God have leaden feet, and cometh slowly to execute wrath, yet he hath an Iron hand, and will strike deadly when he cometh. Though God giveth the wicked security for a time, (saith Job) yet his eyes are fixed upon all their ways, Job 24. 23. And in another place he saith, The wicked are reserved unto the day of destruction, and they shall be brought forth unto the day of wrath. Job 21. 30. So then the holy man Job plainly affirmeth, that the state and condition of all the rich and wealthy worldlings, is as the condition of an Oxe, that is fasted up against the day of slaughter. For he saith, They spend their days in wealth, and suddenly go down to hell, Job 21. 13. But now I pray you nominate the oaths which are so rife and common amongst us.

Theol. There be six oaths which are (of all other) most rife and common, in every mans mouth; and they be these:

By

By my Faith.	By St. Mary.	Six common Oaths.
By my Troth.	By God.	
By our Lady.	As God shall judge me.	

For you cannot rightly talk with a man, but he will flash out some one of these in his ordinary speech.

Asun. *Do you count it so great a matter for a man to swear by his Faith, or his Troth?*

Theol. Yes indeed do I. For our Faith and our Troth, are the most precious Jewels we have. Shall we then lay them to gage for every word we speak? it sheweth we are of small credit, nay very bankrupts. For who but a bankrupt will lay the best jewel in his house, to pledge for every small trifle?

Asun. *I know a man that will never swear but by Cock, or Pye, or Mouse foot. I hope you will not say these be oaths. For he is as honest a man as ever brake bread. You shall not hear an oath come out of his mouth.*

Theol. I do not think he is so honest a man as you make him: for it is no small sin to swear by creatures. The Lord saith by his Prophet Jeremiah, *They have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no Gods: Jer. 5. 7.* So then to swear by creatures, is to forsake God: and I trow you will not say he is an honest man which forsaketh God.

Asun. *I do not believe, that to swear by small things is a forsaking of God.*

Theol.

Theol. You, and such as you are, will believe no more of the word of God, then will stand with your fantasie. But, whatsoever you believe, or believe not, the Word of God standeth sure: and no jot of it shall ever be proved false. But this I will say unto you, because you think it so small a matter to swear by Creatures, That the more vile and base the thing is that you swear by the greater is the oath: because you ascribe that unto a base Creature, which is onely proper to God: namely, to know our hearts, and be a discerners of secret things. For whatsoever a man sweareth by, he calleth it as a witness unto his conscience, that he speaketh the truth, and lyeth not: which thing onely belongeth unto God. And therefore in swearing by Creatures, we rob God of his honour: therefore to swear by the cross of the money, or by bread, or by mouse foot, or the fire, which they call Gods Angel, or any such like, is a robbing God of his honour, and an ascribing of that to the Creature, which is proper onely to the Creator.

Asun. What say you then to them that swear by the Mass, and by the Rood?

Theol. Their sin is as great as the other: for it is an hainous thing to swear by Idols: as St. Mary, our Lady, by the Mass, &c. They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and that say, Thy God, O Dan, liveth: even they shall fall, &

never rise up again, Amos 8. 14. To swear by the sin of *Samaritan*, is to swear by Idols: for *Samaritan* was full of Idols.

Moreover, the Lord threatneth by the Prophet *Zephania*, That he will cut off them that swear by the Lord, and by *Malcham*, or by their King, *Zeph.* 1. 5. For the Idolaters called their Idol *Molech* their King.

Asun. Seeing you condemn both swearing by Creatures, and swearing by Idols; what then must we swear by? You would have us swear by nothing, belike.

Theol. In our ordinary communication we must not swear at all, either by one thing or another: but (as our Lord teacheth us) Our communication must be *Yea, yea, Nay, nay*: For whatsoever is more then these, cometh of evil. *Mat.* 5. 37. And *St. James* saith, Before all things, my Brethren, swear not, neither by Heaven, nor by Earth, nor by any other oath, but let your *Yea* be *Yea*, and your *Nay, Nay*, lest you fall into condemnation, *Jam.* 5. 12.

Anti', It seemeth you are an *Annabaptist*. You condemn all swearing, you will have no swearing at all.

Theol. Not so: for though I condemn swearing by creatures, swearing by idols, and vain swearing: yet I do allow of swearing before a Magistrate, and privately also, in matters of truth.

This

This is warranted from Gods own mouth, where he saith, *Thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth in truth in judgement, and in righteousness.* Jer. 4. 2. And in these cases onely the name of God is to be sworn by, as it is written, *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and thou shalt serve him, and shalt cleave unto him, and shalt swear by his Name.* Deut. 10. 20.

Afun. *May we not swear by God, in our common talk?*

Theol. At no hand. For that it is to take the Name of God in vain, which you know is forbidden. And the wise Heathen could say thus, *When an oath is laid upon thee, undertake it for two causes: either to deliver thy self from some grievous crime and accusation, or else to preserve thy friends from danger.* [Isocrat. ad Demon.] So then the very Heathens, will not allow any oath, much less to swear by God. Another saith, *Avoid an oath, though thou swear truly.* [Phocyl.] So then we see vain swearing condemned even by Heathens.

Afun. *Yea, but for all that we must swear, men will not believe us else.*

Theol. Neither yet will they believe you any whit the more for your swearing. For it doth manifestly appear, that thousands make no conscience all of it. But if you would make conscience always to speak the truth from your heart, without any oaths at all, you

shall be better believed of all honest and wise men, then otherwise with a thousand oaths.

Antil. It is the custome to swear.

Theol. But a wicked and devilish custome.

Antil. I hope, sir, we may swear, as long as we swear truly, and swear by nothing but that which is good.

Theol. It hath been answered before, that in vain matters you may not swear at all.

Antil. As long as we do no worse then that, I hope God will hold us excused.

Theol. God will not hold you excused, when you break his Commandments, and continue so doing.

Antil. What say you then to them that swear wounds and blood, and such like, in a bravery, thinking that it setteth out their speech very well?

Theol. Hell gapeth for them: and they shall one day know what it is to blaspheme God.

Antil. What may we think of such as swear by Gods life, Gods soul, Gods body, Gods heart?

Theol. That their case is most woful and dangerous; and I quake at the naming of them. They are most horrible monstrous, and outrageous blasphemies: enough to make the stones in the streets to crack, and the clouds to fall upon our heads. And we may think that all the Devils in Hell are in readines to carry such blasphemous villaines headlong, into that Lake which burneth with fire

fire and brimstone for ever.

Antil. Do you find in Scripture, that God will so severely punish swearers?

Theol. Yes verily. For besides that which hath been spoken before, we have divers other examples. First of *Senacherib*, the King of *Affyria*, who for his outrageous blasphemies against the God of Heaven, was in most fearful and tragical manner, slain by his own Sons *Adramalech* and *Sharezer*, and that in the Temple, when he was worshipping his Idol-God *Nisroch*. *2 Kings* 19. 37. And yet behold a more fearful example of Gods wrath against blasphemers.

VVe read that an hundred thousand of the *Aramites*, were slain by the *Israelites*, in one day for blaspheming God, *1 King*. 20. 29. and seven and twenty thousand being left, and fleeing into the City of *Aphak* for refuge, were all slain by the fall of an huge great VVall. VVhat shall I here speak how the seven sons of *Saul* the King of *Israel* were hanged up before the Lord in Mount *Gibeah*, for the breach of the oath made to the *Gibeonites* long before? As you may read in, *1 Sam.* 31. In these examples we may plainly see, that the just God, even in this life, sometimes will be revenged on blasphemers and Oath-breakers. And therefore the very Heathens in all ages have been

very careful for the performing of oaths : as Pharaoh King of Egypt, willed Joseph to go up into the Land of Canaan to bury his Father according to his oath made to his Father.

Phil. *Me thinketh these terrible and fearful examples of Gods vengeance against swearers and blasphemers, should strike some terror into the hearts of our blasphemers.*

Theol. One should think so indeed, if any thing could do it. But, alas, they are so hardened in it, and in all other sin, that nothing can move them, except peradventure there were a law made, that every swearer & blasphemer should hold his hand a quarter of an hour in boyling lead. This or some such like severe Law might peradventure curb them a little, and make them bite in their oaths. But otherwise they will never fear any thing till they are in Hell-fire, when it will be too late to repent.

Phil. *What may be the cause of this so often and great swearing ? for surely it is no inherent and in-bred sin in our nature, as some of the other sins be.*

Theol. No verily. But these three I judge to be the causes of it.

Custom.

VWant of admonition.

VWant of punishment.

Phil. *What then are the remedies of it ?*

Theol. The remedies are these.

Dis-

Dis-use.

Friendly admonition.

Prayer.

Some sharp Law.

Phil. Well Sir, now we have heard enough of swearing : I pray you proceed to the next sign of condemnation which is lying.

Theol. Swearing and lying be of very near kindred : For he that is a common swearer, is for the most part a common lyer also : For he that maketh no conscience of swearing, will make no conscience of lying. And as the Lord hateth the one, so also he hateth the other : and as he punisheth the one, so will he punish the other. Therefore Solomon saith, *Lying Lips are an abomination to the Lord.* Prov. 12. 22. St. John saith, *Without shall be dogs, enchaners, whore-mongers, murderers, and whosoever loveth or maketh Lyes.* Rev. 22. 15. Again, the same holy man of God saith, *The Liers shall have their parts and portion in the Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.* Rev. 21. 8.

Phil. These Scriptures which you alledge, do manifestly declare, that God abhorreth lyers, and hath reserved great torments for them. David saith, *That he would banish all Liers from his house.* He that telleth Lyes, (saith he) shall not remain in my sight. Psal. 101. 7. *A lying tongue is one of the six things which God doth hate, and his soul abhor.* Prov. 6. 16, 17. Yet for all this, we see by lamentable experience, how many have

even taught their tongues to lye (as the Prophet saith) and there is no truth in their lips. This vice is almost as common as swearing. For it is hard to find a man that will speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth from his heart, in simplicity and plainness, at all times, in all places, and amongst all persons, without all glossing or dissembling, either for fear, gain, flattery, man-pleasing, hiding of faults, or any sinister respect whatsoever. Where, I say, is this man to be found? I would faine see him, I would faine look upon such a man: It would do my heart good to behold him: I would rejoyce to set mine eyes upon such a man.

Theol. Such a man as yon speak of, is hardly to be found amongst the sons of men. They be black Swans in the earth, they be white Crows, they be rare Birds. For there be very few that will speak the truth from their hearts: yet some such I hope there be. But for the most part, and amongst the greater sort, lying, dissembling and fraud, do bear all the sway. There is no truth, no honesty, no conscience, no simplicity, no plain dealing amongst men in these most corrupt times. Faith and Truth are parted clean away. And as the Kingly Prophet saith, *The faithful are failed from among the Children of men. They speak deceitfully every one with his Neighbour, flattering with their lips, and speaking with a double heart.*
Men

Men now adays study the art of Lying, Flattering, Fawning, Glosing and Dissembling: they have a heart and a heart. They have honey in their mouth, and gall in their heart. Their tongues are as soft as butter and oyl: but their hearts are full of bitterness, poyson and wormwood. They are full of outward courtesie and civility, full of Court-holy-water, when there is no Truth nor plainness in their inward affection. They will speak you fair, when they would cut your throat. They will shew you a good Countenance, when they would eat your heart with Garlick. In outward shew they will carry themselves plausibly, when their hearts are full of Venome and Malice. This Viperous brood do but watch their times and opportunities, till they can get a man upon the hip; and then they will sting him, and work their malice upon him. These fawning Curs will not bark, till they bite; they will lurk and lie close, till they spie their vantage, and then they will shew themselves in their kind: Then they will hoyst a man, and turn him over the perk, if they can. These men are like the waters, which are most deep when they are most calm; like a dangerous rock hid under a calm Sea; or as the Heathens say, Like the Syrens Song, which is the Sailers wrack: Like the Fowlers whistle, which

is the birds death: Like the hid bait, which is the fishes bane: Like the Harpies, which have Virgins faces, and Vultures talents; or like *Hyena*, which spreadeth like a friend and devoureth like a foe; or, as the Scripture saith, like *Jaab*, the Captain of the Host, which spake kindly to *Amasa* another Captain and kissed him, when presently he stab'd him: Or like unto the *Herodians* and Pharisees servants, which came to our Lord Jesus with many sawning insinuations, calling him Good Master, and telling him that he was the plain truth, that he taught the way of God truly, he regarded no mans person, and many good morrows, and all this geer, when as in very deed their purpose was to entangle him in his words, and to entrap him, that they might catch advantage against him, and so cut his throat, and give him pap with a hatchet. Thus is it which the wise man saith, *A man that flattereth his neighbour, spreadeth a net for his feet*, Prov. 29. 5. And again, *As silver dross overlaid upon an earthen pot; so are fawning lips and an evil heart*, Prov. 26. 23. And in another place he saith, *He that beareth hatred, will counterfeite with his lips: but he layeth up deceit in his heart: when he shall shew his voice favourably, trust him not; for there are seven abominations in his heart. He will cover hatred by deceit: but his malice shall be discovered in the*
 Con-

Congregation. In another place he pronounceth a curse upon all these hollow-hearted hypocrites, and meal-mouthed flatterers. For saith he, *Unto him that bleisseth his friend with a loud voice, betimes in the morning, rising up early, a curse shall be imputed.*

Phil. You have very well described the conditions of the men of this age, which have faces, countenances, and tongues, but no hearts; which say, *He cannot live that cannot dissemble;* which have fair faces, and false hearts; which have forgotten, that plain honesty is deep policy.

Theol. The Holy Ghost often in the Proverbs of Salomon, calleth all unregenerate men fools: or as it is in the Hebrew, men without hearts. Because they have no heart to God, no heart to his Word, no heart to his Children, no heart to Godliness, no heart to any thing that good is: they are without an honest heart, an upright heart, a plain heart: They are all in words, nothing in deeds: They promise mountains, and perform mote-hills: They will speak well of Religion, and practise nothing: They will give fair words to their friends, and do just nothing for them.

Phil. The world is full of these masked counterfeiters: And lying and dissembling did never more abound.

Theol. It is too true, that lying and dissembling are most rife, and over-common vices amongst

amongst all sorts of men: but especially it doth over-flow and super-abound in Shop-keepers and servants. For both these make a trade and occupation of it: they can do no other but lye. It cleaveth unto them as the nail to the door.

Phil. I do certainly know some Shop-keepers, which (to utter their bad wares, and to blind the eyes of the simple) do trade in lying all the day long, from Sun to Sun, from the opening of the shop and windows, to the shutting of the same. And what is their life (if customers come in a pace) but swearing, lying, dissembling and deceiving? They will lye as fast as a dog will trot, as we say. It is a wonder that their shops and all their wares do not fire over their heads, for their so common, so lewd, and so abominable lying: and that against their own knowledge, against their conscience, against God, against their neighbour, against Heaven and earth, men and Angels.

Thool. True it is, we may marvel at the long suffering of God in this behalf. But this is to be noted, that God doth not immediately punish all notorious sinners in this life, but reserveth thousands to the judgment of the great day. In this life he only toucheth out some few, whom he smiteth for the example of others, that they might fear and tremble, and learn by other mens harms to beware.

Therefore even in this life, we see before our

our eyes, some lyers, some drunkards, some whoremongers, some swearers, some misers of the world, some ruffians and cut-throats, stricken down by the revengeful hand of God: But whereas God smiteth one of these in this life, he letteth an hundred escape. For if he should punish all offenders in this life, to what purpose should the Judgment serve? If he should punish none, then we should think there were no God, or that he were shut up idle in Heaven, and would do neither good nor evil, nor once meddle in the matters of the earth; as some Epicures have dreamed. Therefore to avoid both these extremities, God in his heavenly wisdom hath thought good to meet with some, even in this world.

Phil. I am of this mind, that the goods which men get by swearing, lying, and deceit, will never prosper.

Theol. You are not therein deceived. For God will blow upon all such kind of evil-gotten goods, and they shall be put in a bottomless purse, as the Prophet saith. The Holy Ghost in the book of the Proverbs, hath many excellent sayings to this effect: as chap. 13. The riches of vanity shall be diminished: but he which laboureth with the hand, shall increase them. And again, He that dealeth deceitfully, shall become poor: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. In another place he saith, The
deceit.

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deceitful man roseth not that which he has caught in hunting. Prov. 12. 17. That is, he shall not long enjoy or taste the prey, which he hath gotten by fraud. For either one trouble or other will come upon him, that he shall not be able to possess, or take delight in the spoil. Therefore it is said, *The bread of deceit is sweet to a man: but after his mouth shall be filled with gravel.* That is, in the end the crafty person shall meet with many troubles. For either his conscience will upbraid him and check him, or vengeance will plague him for his deceit. The fears eares, and sorrows which he shall have, shall be as it were so many sharp stones to set his teeth on edge, and to vex him. Wherefore instead of meat, he shall feed on gravel; and instead of wheat, on pebble stones. Small pleasure is taken in the end, in goods ill gotten, or livings unlawfully come by. For the Holy Ghost hath passed sentence upon them, that they shall never prosper.

Phil. It sometimes falleth out, that they prosper for a time: but, as we say, the third beir shall not enjoy them: For God will curse them in our posterity: and our childrens children shall feel the smart of our sins. Job saith, *The offspring of the wicked shall not be satisfied with bread: for one of doubt God will bless that onely which is got with a good conscience, in the works of our calling: and it shall remain blessed unto us, and our posterity.*

17. Therefore the Spirit saith, The just man that walketh in his uprightness, is blessed, and blessed shall his children be after him. Prov. 20. 7. But God will not bless, but curse that which is got with an evil conscience; as swearing, lying, dissembling, deceiving &c.

Theol. Some ancient VVriters have spoken very prudently to this point. For one saith, *Injusta lucra breves habent voluptates, longos autem dolores*: [Jerom.] That is, Unjust gain hath long sorrow, and short joy. Another saith, *Eligas damnum potius quam turpe lucrum, illud enim semel tantum te dolore afficiet, hoc vero semper*: [August.] That is, Choose loss, rather than filthy lucre: for the one will grieve thee but once, the other for ever. A third saith, *Melius est honeste pauperem esse, quam turpisur divisem. Hoc enim commiserationem, illud vero reprehensionem adfert*: [Bernar.] It is better to be honestly poor, than wickedly rich. For the one moveth pity, the other reproof. A wise Heathen also saith, We may not wax rich unjustly, But live of just things which he calleth holy things.

Phil. Have we not examples in the Scriptures of such as have been punished for lying?

Theol. Yes: for we read how the Gibeonites, for their lying, and dissembling were made drudges and slaves to the Israelites, Josh 9 23. Gebezi also, the servant of Elisha the Prophet, for his lying and covetousness together, was smitten

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smitten with a most grievous leprosie, 2 Kin. 5. 27. *Ananias* and *Saphira* his wife, for their lying and dissembling were stricken down stark dead by the immediate hand of God, by the rebuke of *Peter*, Acts 5. 5, 10.

Zophar, a friend of *Jobs*, speaking of these kind of men, saith, They shall suck the gall of *Aspes*, and the *Vipers* tongue shall slay them. They shall flie from the Iron weapons and a bow of steel shall strike them thorow. Job 20. 16, 24.

Now by all these examples, we may plainly see, how greatly God abhorreth lying and dissembling.

Phil. O therefore that we could follow the counsel of the Apostle, who saith, Lye not one to another: Sith you have put off the old man with his works. Col. 3. 9. And again, Cast away lying, and speak every one the truth to his neighbour. Eph. 4. 25. The manner of speech which the Apostle useth, is very forcible, implying thus much, That we should in a kind of disdain or detestation cast it away, and throw it from us. Would so God therefore that we were come to such a detestation and loathing of lying, that we should even spittle at it; and cry, Lie upon it, and all that use it. O that we could hate it as the Devil, which is the Father of it; and as hell fire, which is the reward of it! O that we were come but so far as the Heathen man, who saith, I hate him at the gates of Hell, who hath one thing

ing in his tongue, and another in his heart.

Antil. Yet for all this, we find in the Scriptures, that even some of the Godly have been taken hardy in lying, and yet have not sinned in so doing; as Abraham, Jacob, Rahab, the Midwives of Egypt; and therefore why may not we do so too?

Theol. I told you before, that you may not make the infirmities of Gods people, rules for you to live by. And further I answer, that all these did offend in their lying. Some of them indeed I grant are commended for their love to the Church, and charitable affections to Gods people; but none of them simply for lying, which is a thing condemned even of the Heathen. For saith one of them, *Lying doth corrupt the life of man; and every wise and Godly man doth hate lying.* [Eurip. Phenis.]

Antil. But may we not lye now and then for advantage.

Theol. No verily: neither is there any good advantage to be got that way. For when you have made up your accounts, all charges deducted, and all expences defrayed, your clear gains will be very small. For by wilful and customary lying, you gain inward grief, and lose true joy; you gain short pleasure, and lose perpetual glory; you gain hell, and lose Heaven; Now then reckon your gain.

Phil. I pray you let us grow towards a conclusion of this point: and shew us briefly the chief causes of lying.

Theol.

Theol. The chief causes of lying are the
Customs.

Covetousness.

Fear.

The Devil.

Phil. What be the remedies?

Theol. The remedies be these:

Dis-use.

Contentation.

Godly boldness.

Earnest Prayer.

Phil. You have spoken enough of this vice,
cause all such to abhor it, and forsake it, as have
any drop of grace, or spark of Gods fear in their
but as for them that are filthy, let them be more fil-
thy. Now, I pray you, speak your judgements of this
seventh sign of condemnation which is drunkenness.

Theol. It is so brutish and beastly a sin, that
a man would think it should not need to be
spoken against: but that all reasonable men
should even abhor it, and quake to think of it.
For it is a most swinish thing, it maketh of
man a beast: it taketh away the heart of man
from all goodness, as witnesseth the Prophet
Hosea, chap. 4. 11. saying, Whoredome, wine
and new wine, take away the heart. For what
heart, what stomach, what appetite, can whores-
mongers and drunkards have to any thing that
is good? either to hear, or to read the Word
of God, or to pray, or to meditate in the same.
Alas, they are far from it, far from God, and far
from all grace and goodness. Therefore Joel
saith, Awake ye drunkards: weep and howl ye
drinkers of wine. Joel 1. 5. Yea, the mighty
God

he God of heaven doth pronounce a woe against them, saying, *Woe unto them that rise up early to follow drunkenness: and to them that continue until night, till the wine do enflame them.* Isa. 5. 11. Our Lord Jesus bids us take heed of it: *Take heed, saith he, That your hearts be not overcome with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.* Luk. 21. 34. Thus you hear how both Christ himself, and sundry of the Prophets, do thunder down from Heaven against this gross beastliness, which now aboundeth and reigneth amongst the sons of men.

Phil. True indeed: but almost nothing will make men leave it; for it is a most ripe and over-common Vice: We see many that think themselves some bodies, (and, as we say, no small fools) which yet will be overtaken with it, and thereby lose their credit and reputation, &c. The Holy Ghost avoucheth, saying, *Wine is a mocker, and strong drink is raging: Whosoever is deceived therein, is not wise.* Prov. 20. 1.

Theol. The wise King in the same book, doth most notably and fully describe unto us the inconveniences and mischiefs which do accompany drunkenness, and follow drunkards at the heels. *To whom* (saith he) *is woe? to whom is alas? to whom is strife? to whom is babbling? to whom are wounds without cause? to whom is the redness of the eyes? Even to them that carry*
long

long as the wine ; to them that go and seek out
 more wine. Prov. 23. 29. In the same Chap.
 he saith, Be not of the number of them which are
 bibbers of Wine, or of them which glasse themselves
 with flesh ; for the drinker and the feaster shall
 become poor ; and the sleeper shall be cloathed with
 rags. Prov. 23. 20, 21. Moreover he saith,
 Their eyes shall behold strange women ; and that
 they shall be like him that lyeth in the midst of the
 Sea, and sleepest in the top of the mast. Prov. 23.
 33. In all these speeches the Holy Ghost doth
 in most lively manner, describe unto us the
 properties of drunkards ; even their staggering,
 their reeling, their snorting, their senseless
 sensuality. Behold then, what be the cursed
 fruits and events of drunkenness : Even these
 which follow ; woe, alas, grief, misery, begger-
 ry, poverty, shame, lusts, strife, babbling, brawling,
 fightings, quarrellings, surfeiting, sickness,
 diseases, &c. So then I conclude, that drunken-
 ness is a vice more becoming an hog, then
 any reasonable man. And as one saith ; It is the
 Metropolitane City of all the province of vices.
 Well therefore saith the Heathen writer,
*When the wine is in, a man is as a running Coach
 without a Coachman.* [Demo. Olinth.]

Phil. Let us hear what execrations have been
 done upon drunkards in former ages, that now
 men may learn to take heed by their examples.

Theol. Amnon, one of Davids ungracious
 children,

children, being drunk, was slain by his brother *Abfalom*. 2 Sam. 13. 29. *Benhadad*, King of Syria, being drunk, was discomfited by *Ahab*, King of Israel. 1 King. 20. 20. *Elab*, King of Israel, being drunk, was slain by *Zimri* his servant, and captain of his Chariots; who also succeeded him in the Kingdom. 1 King. 16. 10. *Lot* being drunk, committed incest with his own Daughters; and therefore was punished in his posterity. Gen. 19. 37. Thus we see what executions have been done even upon Kings, for this kind of sin. Therefore let men learn once at last to shun vice, and embrace vertue; and as the Apostle saith, to make an end of their *Salvation with fear and trembling*. For all our shifts and starting-holes will serve us to no purpose in the end, but when we have fished hither and thither never so much yet at the last we must be faine to be shut up in Gods wrath.

Antil. What, I pray you, do you make it so great a matter if a man be a little overtaken with drink now and then? There is no man but he hath his faults: and the best of us all may be amended. If neighbours meet together now and then at the Ale-house, and play a game at *Maw* for a pot of Ale, meaning no hurt: I take it to be good fellowship, and a good means to encrease love amongst neighbours.

Theol. I see you would faine make fair weather

ther of it, and smoothe over the matter with sweet words, as though there were no such great evil in it. But howsoever you mince it, and blanch it over yet the Apostle saith flatly, that *Drunkards shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*. I think this one sentence is enough to amaze and strike through the hearts of all drunkards in the world: for it is as much in effect, as if the Apostle had said; All drunkards are notorious reprobates and hell-hounds; branded of Satan, and devoted to perpetual destruction and damnation.

But you say, you mean no hurt. I answer; Whatsoever you mean, your actions are nought, and your fellowship as bad. For what good meaning can you have, or what good fellowship call you it, for poor labouring men, artificers, and such like, to sit idle all the day long, in Taverns, and Ale-houses, mis-spending their time, and their money, in gaming, rioting, swearing, staving, swilling, bezzelling, bibbing, brawling and brabbling? There is no true fellowship in it; it is meer impiety, if we call it impiety; for poor men to live idly, dissolutely, neglecting their callings, while their poor wives and children sit crying at home for bread, being ready to starve, to beg or to steal. I pray you speak your conscience, what good fellowship is there in this?

Antw. Yet for all that, there be some which abstain

Abstain from Ale houses, and yet are as bad as any other. For they will back-bite and slander their neighbours; they will do them a shrewd turn, as soon as any other; they are envious, they censure us, and disdain our company, yet we think our selves as good as they, for all their shews of holiness.

Theol. You speak more then you know or can justify, against some better then your self. But if it were so, you should not justify one sin by another, a lesser by a greater; which is to no purpose.

Antil. Will you then condemn all good fellowship?

Theol. No, no; I do greatly allow godly and Christian fellowship: and acknowledg it to be one of the chiefest comforts we have in the world. I know we are commanded to love brotherly fellowship, 1 Pet. 2. 17. But as for your pot-companionship, I hate it, and abhor it: For it is written, *He that followeth the idle, shall be filled with poverty*, Prov. 28. 19. And again, *He that keepeth company with Banqueters, shameth his Father*, Prov. 28. 7. And in another place, *He that loveth pastime, shall be a poor man; and he that loveth Wine and Oyl shall not be rich*, Prov. 24. 17.

Phil. Good Mr. Theologus, talk no more with him; but let us draw near to the winding up of this matter; and tell us in a word, which be the chief causes of drunkenness.

Theol.

Theol. The causes are these :

Causes of drunkenness.

Ill company. | Idleness.
Ale houses. | A wicked humor.

Phil. Which be the remedies ?

Theol. The remedies are these :

Remedies for drunkenness.

Avoiding of evil company.
Shunning of Ale-houses.
Labouring in your callings.
A good course of life.

Phil. Well Sir, you have reasoned far enough in this point : Let us now come to the eighth sign of condemnation, which is idleness.

Theol. Concerning idleness, this I say briefly : that it is the mother of all vice, and the step-dame of all Vertue : yea, it is the very bel-dame of all enormities. It is the mother of whoredome, the mother of pride, the mother of theft, the mother of drunkenness, the mother of ignorance, the mother of error, &c. And what not ? Idleness was one of the principal sins of Sodom, as the Prophet Ezekiel testifieth saying, *Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her, & in her Daughters*, Ezek. 16. 49. Solomon is very plentiful in this matter : For saith he, *The sluggard lusteth and hath nought*, Prov. 13. 4. And again, *The sluggard is wiser in his own conceits, then seven men that can give a sensible reason*, Prov. 26. 16. That is, he taketh himself the wisest of many, because he spareth his body, when

when others take pains : he saith, *Yet a little sleep, yet a little slumber, yet a little folding the hands : and his poverty cometh as a Travel-ler ; That is, unawares : and his necessity like an armed man ; That is, strongly. Prov. 24. 33. Then he foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh. For, He hideth his hand in his bosom, and it grieveth him to put it to his mouth again. Eccles. 4. 5.*

In another place the Holy Ghost saith, *The sloathful man will not plough because of Winter : therefore he shall beg in Summer, and have nothing. Prov. 16. 15. Again, The sloathful man is brother to him that is a great waster. Prov. 18. 9.*

Moreover, it is said, that *the sluggard turns himself upon his bed, as the door doth upon the hinges : Prov. 26. 14. That is, He keepeth his bed as if he were fastned to it.*

And because the Spirit will abound in this point, it is further written of the sloathful man, that he saith, *An huge Lyon is in the way : I shall be slain in the streets : Prov. 26. 13. That is, when any good matter is in hand, (as preaching, praying, reading, giving to the poor, &c.) then he draweth back, he shrinketh into the shell, he findeth one let or other, one excuse or other. Then profit and pleasure, business and idleness, matters at home, and matters abroad, company and a thousand*

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occasions

occasions will lye in his way, as so many Lyons, to let and hinder him. So then we see how lively and plentifully the Holy Scriptures do paint out the lazy lubbers of this world, and sons of idleness, which are as hardly drawn to any good thing, as a Bear to the stake. As for the duties of Religion, they go as lively and as cheerfully about them, as a thief goeth up the Ladder to be executed for his theft.

Phil. I do plainly see, that this sin of idleness is a very gross evil, and the root of many vices; yet for all that, there be a great number which think they were born to live idly, as many young Gentlemen, and such like; which imagine they came into the world for no other purpose, but to hunt and hawk, card and dice, riot and revel; and so spend their dayes in pleasure and vanity. Again, there be many lazy Lozels, and luskish Youths, both in Towns and Villages, which do nothing all the day long but walk in the streets, sit upon the stalls, and frequent Taverns and Ale houses. Many rich Citizens, especially women, do ordinarily, lye in bed till nine of the clock, and then forsooth rise, and make themselves ready to go to dinner. And after they have well dined, they spend the rest of the day, and a good part of the night also, in playing, prattling, babbling, cackling, prating & gossiping: sic on this idle life. Many prophane serving-men also do falsely suppose, that they were born only to game, riot, swear, whore, ruffle it and royst

it out, and to spend their time in meer idleness. But of all these, well said the Heathen Philosopher, *Illos pariter indignantur & dii & homines, quisquis otiosus* : Both God and men do hate the idle person.

Theol. It is a lamentable thing to see so many men and women live so idly and so unprofitable as they do. For alas, there be too many which follow no honest calling, live to no use; no body is the better for them? they do no good, neither to the Church or Commonwealth: they are like Drone-Bees; they are unprofitable burdens of the earth. God hath no use of them; the Church no good, the Commonwealth no benefit; their neighbours no profit; the poor no relief. They imagine they came into the world to do nothing but eat, drink and sleep, and rise up to play: they think they should spend their time in dicing and dancing, in whoredome and bravery, in gluttony, and belly-chear, in masting themselves like Hogs of *Epicurus* Heard, in pampering their panches, and cramming their bellies: in fattening themselves like Boars in a Frank, till they be well brawned, and (as *Job* saith) *till their bones run full of marrow, their faces strut with fatness, and they have collops in their flank.* Job 15. 27. Oh, what a beastly life is this! Fie upon it, fie upon it. It is more meet for *Epicures*, than

Christians ; for swine ; than for men ; for *Sardanapalus* and *Heliogabalus* , and such like belly-gods, than for the professors of the Gospel. But of all such, *Job* saith enough, *They spend their dayes in pleasure , and suddenly go down to hell.* Job 21. 13.

Phil. *But may it not be allowed unto Lords and Ladies, Gentlemen and Gentlewomen, and other great ones, to live idly, sith they have wherewith to maintain it ?*

Theol. God doth allow none to live idly ; but all great and small, are to be employed one way or other : either for the benefit of the Church or Common-wealth ; or for the good government of their own households ; or for the good of Towns and parishes, and those amongst whom they do converse ; or for the succour and relief of the poor ; or for the furtherance of the Gospel, or the maintenance of the ministry ; or for one good use or other. To these ends, our wits, our learning, our reading, our skill, our policy, our wealth, our health, our wisdom and authority, are to be referred : knowing this, that one day we shall come to give an account of our Bailiwick, and to be reckoned withal for the employment of our Talents. For this cause *Job* saith, that, *Man is born to travel, as the sparks flie upward.* Job 5. 7. And God hath laid this upon *Adam* and all his posterity, *In the sweat of thy brows thou*

thou shalt eat thy bread. Gen. 3. 19. Some do set down four causes why every man should labour diligently in his calling.

First, to bear the yoke laid upon all mankind by the Lord.

2ly, To get the necessaries of this life.

3ly, To live to the profit of humane society.

Lastly, To avoid evil thoughts and actions.

St. *Paul* findeth great fault with some in the Church of *Thessalonica*, because they walked inordinate'y, that is, idly, and out of a lawful calling, and therefore concluded, That such as would not labour, should not eat. So then, we do plainly see, that God alloweth Idleness in none. For when we are idle, (as hath been shewed before) we lye open to the Devil, and his temptations, and he gets within us, and prevaileth against us. While *David* tarried idly at home in the beginning of the year, when Kings used to go forth to the Battel, he was soon overtaken with those two foul sins of Adultery and Man-slaughter. So long as *Sampson* Warred with the Philistines, he could never be taken or overcome: but after he gave himself to idleness and pleasure, he not onely committed Fornication with the Strumpet *Delilah*, but also was taken of his enemies, and his eyes pulled out of his head. O what a lamentable thing is Idleness. Therefore the Holy Ghost sends us to School to the

little Creature, The Ant, to learn of her both to avoid idleness, and also to use Wisdom and providence in her actions : *Go to the Pismire, O sluggard, behold her ways, and be wise : For she, having no guide, task-master, nor ruler, prepareth her meat in the Summer, and gathereth her food in the Harvest. Prov. 6. 6.* And in good sooth, it is wonderful to observe what infinite pains, and unwearied labour, this silly Creature taketh in Summer, that she may be well provided for against Winter. Let us therefore learn wisdom from her example : and let us set before our eyes, the Looking-glass of all Creatures. Let us consider how the Birds flye, the Fishes swim, the Worms creep, the Heavens turn, the Elements move, the Sea ebbeth and floweth uncessantly : yea, the earth it self, which is the most heavy & unweildy creature of all other, yet never ceaseth his working, bringeth forth his burden in Summer, and labouring inwardly all the Winter, in concocting and digesting his nourishment for the next spring. Thus we see how all creatures are diligently and painfully exercised in their kinds. And therefore it is a great shame for us to live idly, carelessly, and dissolutely. Let us therefore learn once (at last) to fly sloath, and every one to live faithfully, diligently, and industriously in our several callings. So shall we both keep Satan at the staves end, and also much
 in

sin out of our souls, which otherwise idleness will force in upon us.

Phil. I must needs confess that idleness is a gross vice in whomsoever it is found. But especially, in my judgement, it is most odious in Magistrates and Ministers.

Theol. That is so in truth. For they ought to be guides, governours, shepherds, and watch-men over the people of God. And therefore for them to neglect their duties and charges, is a most horrible thing, sith it concerneth the hurt of many. Therefore well said the Heathen Poet, A Magistrate or Minister may not be lazy or sloathful, to whom the nursing of the people is given in charge, and of whom many things are to be cared for. Hom. l. 2.

What a lamentable thing therefore is it, when Magistrates are prophane, irreligious, popish, vicious and negligent in the duties of their calling? And how much more lamentable is it, when Ministers neglect their studies, slack preaching, and prayer, and give up themselves, some to covetousness, some to pride, some to husbandry, some to other worldly affairs, and such like? Would to God therefore that both these kinds of publick persons would cast off idleness, and sloath, and with diligence faithfulness, care and conscience perform the duties of their places. For it is an excellent thing for any to be a good man in

his place : As a good Magistrate that ruleth well, that governeth wisely, which favoureth good men, and good causes : and defendeth them : which also setteth himself against bad men and causes, and punish them sharply and severely : which moreover maintaineth vertue, even of a very love he beareth unto it in his heart : and punisheth vice, of a very zeal and hatred against it : and not for his credit onely, or to please some, or because he must needs do it, and can do no less, or for any sinister respect ; but even of a love to God, a care of his glory, a conscience of duty, and a fervent zeal against sin. So likewise it is a notable thing for a Minister to be a good man in his place, to be studious in the Law of God, diligent and painful in preaching ; and that out of a love to God, a zeal of his glory, deep pity and compassion toward the souls of the people, seeking by all means possible to win them unto God ; carrying himself in all his actions amongst them, wisely, religiously unblamably, and inoffensively. So again, it is a worthy thing to be a good rich man, which doth much good with his riches, which keepeth a good house, relieveth the poor ministereth to the necessities of the Saints, and giveth chearfully and with discretion, where need is. So also it is a commendable thing to be a good neighbour, a good townsmen,

by

by whom a man may live quietly, peaceably, joyfully and comfortably.

And lastly, to be a good poor man : that is humble, lowly, dutiful, painful, ready to help, and ready to please. Oh, this I say, this is a most excellent and glorious thing, when every man keepeth his standing his range, and his rank; when all men, with care and conscience, perform the duties of their places: when the husband doth the duty of an husband; and the wife of a wife: when the father doth the duty of a father, and the child of a child: when the master doth the duty of a master; and the servant of a servant: when every man setteth God before his eyes, in doing those things which especially belong unto him. For herein consisteth the honour of God, the glory of the Prince, the Crown of the Church, the safety of Cities, the strength of Kingdoms, and the very preservation of all things.

Aun. You have said well in some things: but yet I do not see, but that rich men and women may live idly, sith they have enough wherewithal to maintain it. For may not a man do with his own what he list?

Theol. No verily. For you may not take your own knife, and cut your own throat with it: neither may you take your own Ax, and kill your own child with it. Therefore that reason is naught. Albeit therefore wealthy

men & women have great plenty of all things, so as they need not labour, yet let them be profitably employed some way or other : let them exercise themselves in one good thing or other. If they can find nothing to do, let them give themselves much to private prayers, and reading of the Scriptures, that they may be able to instruct and exhort others. Or else let Ladies and Gentlewomen do as that good woman *Dorcas* did, that is, buy cloath, cut it out, work it, sew it, make shirts, smocks, coats, and garments, and give them to the poor, when they have so done. For it is said of *Dorcas*, that *she was a woman full of good works, and alms-deeds which she did.* Act. 9. 36. She was a merciful and tender-hearted woman, she was the poor mans friend, she cloathed the poor and naked, she knew it was a sacrifice acceptable to God. Oh that the wealthy women of our Land, would follow the example of *Dorcas* ! But (alas) these dayes bring forth few *Dorcas*es.

Phil. As you have shewed us the causes of the former evils : so now, I pray you, shew the causes of this also.

Theol. The causes of idleness are,
 Causes of | Evil examples.
 Idleness. | Bad education.
 Living out of a calling.

Phil. Shew us also the remedies.

Theol. The remedies are,

Good

Good education. | Good examples. (calling
Labor in youth. | Diligence in a Lawful

Phil. *Now then let us come to the last sign of
damnation, which is oppression. And I beseech you,
good sir, speak your mind of it out of the Scriptures.*

Theol. It is so infinite a matter, that I know
not where to begin or where to make an end
of it. It is a bottomless sink of most grievous
enormities. I shall enter into a Labyrinth,
where I shall not know to get out again. But
sith you are desirous to know something of it,
this I say, That it is a most cruel monster, a
bloody vice, a most ugly and hideous fiend of
hell. The Scriptures in very many places do
cry out upon it, arraigning it, adjudging it, and
condemning it down to hell. They do also
thunder and lighten upon all those which are
stained and corrupted with this vice, calling
them by such names, and giving them such ti-
tles, as are taken off from the effects of this sin,
and most fit for oppressours : as namely, that,
They grind the faces of the poor ; Isa. 3. 15.
that, They pluck off their skins from them, and
their flesh from their bones : Mic. 3. 2. That,
They eat them up as they eat bread. Psal. 14. 4.
Those are they which strive to devour all,
(like savage beasts) and to get the whole earth
into their hands either by hook or by crook,
by right or by wrong ; by oppression fraud
and violence : these Caterpillers and Cor-
morants

morants of the Earth, are like unto the Whale fish, that swalloweth up quick other little fishes : they are like a Lyon, that devoureth other beasts : they are like the Falcon, which seizeth, plumeth and preyeth upon other fowls : these greedy Wolves devour all, and swallow up the poor of the Land : therefore the Prophets of God do thunder out many great woes against them.

First, The Prophet *Esay* saith, Chap. 5. 8. *Wo unto them that joyn house to house, and a field to field, till there be no place for the poor to dwell in, that they may be placed by themselves in the midst of the earth.*

2ly, The Prophet *Jeremy* saith, *Wo unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers without equity.* Jer. 22. 13.

3ly, The Prophet *Micah* saith, *Wo unto them that covet fields, and take them by violence ; and so oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.* Mic. 2. 2.

4ly. The Prophet *Habbakkuk* cryeth out, saying, *Wo unto him that buildeth a Town with blood, and erecteth a City by iniquity.* Hab. 2. 12. St. *James* also most terribly threatneth these kind of men, saying, *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your Gold and Silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire.* Jam. 5. 1, 3.

Lastly,

Lastly, St. Paul saith flatly, that *Extortioners shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* 1 Cor. 6. 10.

Phil. And all little enough. For they are steeped in their sin, and the stain of it is soaked in to them, as it will hardly ever be washed out. True it is that you said that these cruel oppressing blood-suckers are the most pernicious and pestilent vermine that creep upon the face of the earth; and yet I think there were never more of them then in these our dayes. For now the wicked world is full of such as do sundry ways bite, pinch, and nip the poor, as we see by every days lamentable experience. But you can speak more of it then I: Therefore I pray you lay open the sundry kinds of Oppression used in these days.

<p>Theol. There is Oppression by usury: Oppression by bribery: Oppression by racking of Rents: Oppression by taking excessive Fines: Oppression in bargaining: Oppression in letting of houses. Oppression in letting of grounds. Oppression in binding poor men to unreasonable Covenants: Oppression in thrusting poor men out of their Houses: Oppression in hiring poor mens Houses over their heads: Oppression in taking of fees: Oppression by the Lawyers: Oppression by the Church-Officers: Oppression by en-</p>	<p>The sundry kinds of Oppression. grossers:</p>
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engrossers : Oppression by forestallers : Oppression of the Church : Oppression of the Ministry : Oppression of the poor : Oppression of Widows : Oppression of Orphans.

And thus we see how all swarms with Oppressions ; and nothing but Oppressions, Oppressions.

Phil. *In truth, this is a most cruel and oppressing age wherein we live ; yea, a very Iron age. It seems that the great ones mind nothing else : they are altogether set upon oppression ; they dole and dream of it, they find sweet in it, and therefore they are mad of it : As Solomon saith, Oppression maketh a wise man mad. It seems therefore, that this vice is of such marvellous force, that it can bereave men of their wits, and make them stark mad of getting goods by hook or by crook, they care not how, nor from whom, so they have it. Yet no doubt the most wise God hath enacted many good Laws for the suppressing of this evil, and threatneth the execution of them in his own person : and especially his Law doth provide for the safety of the poor, the fatherless, the widow, and the stranger. But you, Master Theologus can repeat the Statutes better then I, because you are a professed Divine : therefore I pray you, let us hear them from you.*

Theol. *In the 22 chapter of Exodus, God made this Law following : You shall not trouble any widow or fatherless child. If thou vex or*
trouble

trouble such, and so he call and cry unto me, I will surely hear his cry. Then shall my wrath be kindled, and I will kill you with the sword: and your wives shall be widows, & your children fatherless.

Again he saith, Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is needy and poor: but thou shalt give him his hire for his day; neither shall the Sun go down upon it (for he is poor, and therewith sustaineth his life) lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee. Deut. 24. 14, 15.

Moreover the Lord saith, Thou shalt do no injury to a stranger; for ye were strangers in the Land of Egypt. Exod. 22. 21. And GOD himself threatneth, That he will be a swift witness against those which keep back the Hirelings VVages, and vex the VViddow and the Fatherless. Mal. 3. 5. The Apostle saith, 1 Thes. 4. 6. Let no man oppress or defraud his brother in any matter. For the Lord is an avenger of all such things. Solomon also saith, If in a Countrey thou seest the oppression of the poor, and the defrauding of justice and judgement; be not astonied at the matter: for he that is higher then the highest regardeth, and there be higher then they. All these holy Statutes and Laws, enacted and provided against oppressors, do plainly shew what care the Lord hath for his poor, distressed, and desolate people.

Phil. But these oppressing hell-hounds, are such as care for nothing. No Law of the Almighty can

can bridle them ; nothing can fear them ; nothing can restrain them ; they have made a covenant with hell and death. They are frozen in their dregs, they are past feeling. And as Job saith, These are they that abhor the light ; they know not the ways thereof, neither continue in the paths thereof. Job 24. 13. Their hearts are as hard as the Adamant. Nothing can move them, nothing can work upon them. There is great crying out every where of the stone in the reins, which indeed is a great torment to the body. But there is no complaining of the stone in the heart, I mean a stony heart, which is the sorest disease that possibly can fall into the soul of a man ; and yet in these times it groweth very rife. For mens hearts are as hard as brass, and as the nether Mill-stone, as the Scripture speaketh. For many, especially of these unmerciful and oppressing Tyrants, say in their hearts, God will do neither good nor evil. Amos 6. 3. Therefore they put the evil day far from them, and approach to the seat of iniquity. They are at ease in Sion ; they lye upon beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves on their beds, and eat the Lambs of the flock, and the Calves out of the stall. They sing to the sound of the Viol : they invent instruments of Musick, like David : they drink Wine in bowls, and no man is sorry for the afflictions of Joseph : that is, The troubles of Gods People. The Prophet Esay also complains of these kind of men, saying, They regard not the
work

work of the Lord, neither consider the work of his hands. Isa. 5. 12. And another Prophet saith, They say in their hearts, God hath forgot, he hides away his face, and will never see. Psal. 10. 11. They are so proud, that they seek not for God. They think always there is no God: his judgements are far out of their sight, their ways alway prosper, and therefore they say in their hearts, Iush, we shall never be moved, nor come in danger.

Theol. You have spoken very well touching the steeliness & hardness of these mens hearts, who are so unmerciful to their poor neighbours, that almost none can live by them. They do so disturb and disquiet all things, that poor men can dwell in no rest by them. Therefore truly saith the wise King, *A mighty man molesteth all, and both hireth the fool, and hires those that pass by: but the poor man speaketh with Prayers*: That is, by the way of entreaty and supplications. For the poor are afraid of them: they quake when they see them, as the beasts quake at the roaring of a Lyon. Many poor Farmers, poor Husband-men, poor Herds, poor Labourers, poor Widows and Hirelings, do quake and tremble when these greedy Wolves come abroad. And, (as Job saith) *The poor of the earth hide themselves together*. Job 24. 4. For (alas! in their Hearts they cannot indure the sight of them)

them) they had as leewe meet the devil as meet them, for fear of one displeasure or another. For either they fear that they will warn them out of their houses, or parley about more rent, and straiter covenants, or beg away their best Kine, or borrow their Horses, or command their Carts, or require a weeks work of them, and never pay them for it, or a twelve-months pasture for a couple of Geldings, or that they'l make one quarrel or another unto them, one mischief or another. So that these poor souls cannot tell what to do, or which way to turn them, for fear of these cruel Termagants. They are even weary of their lives. For they have no remedy for these things, but even to bear it off with head and shoulders: Therefore they often wish they were out of the world, and that they were buried quick. They say, if any will knock them on the head, they will forgive him. O most piteous case! O lamentable hearing! These poor silly creatures are fain to drudg and moil all the year long, in Winter and Summer, in frost and snow, in heat and cold, to provide their Rents, that they may be able to pay their cruel Landlord at his day. For else how shall they be able to look him in the face? Yet their rent is so rack't, that all they can do is little enough to pay it; and when that is paid, (alas!) the poor man and his wife, and children

children have little left to take to, or to maintain themselves withal; they are fain to gnaw of a crust, to fare hardly, and go thinly clad. Sometimes they have Victuals, sometimes none. The poor children cry for bread. Poor widows also, and poor fatherless children, are found weeping and mourning in their houses, and in their streets. So that now we may with *Soloman, Turn and consider all the oppressions that are wrought under the Sun*, Eccl. 4. 1. We may behold the tears of the oppressed, and none comforteth them. For the mighty ones do wrong the weaker, even as the stronger beasts do push and harm the feeble. These griping Oppressours do pinch the poor even to the quick. They pluck away from the Fatherless and widdows that little which they have. If there be but a Cow, or a few Sheep left, they will have them. If there be a little commodity of House or Land, Oh what devices they have to win it in, and to wring it away! These Tyrants will go as nigh as the bed they lie upon. They know well enough, the poor men are not able to wage law with them and therefore they may do what wrong they will, and shew what cruelty they list. Hence come the tears of the oppressed; hence cometh the weeping and wailing of the poor. But alas, poor souls! they may well weep to ease their hearts a little; but there is none to comfort them:

them : remedy they can have none. But yet, assuredly, the everlasting God doth look upon them, and will be revenged. For the eyes of the poor, the fatherless and the widows, have entred into the ears of the Lord of Hosts, who is an avenger of all such things ; yea, a strong revenger, as Solomon saith, *Enter not into the Field of the Fatherless, for their Revenger is strong ; he himself will plead their cause against thee.* Prov. 23. 14. And again he saith, *Rob not the poor, because he is poor ; neither tread down the afflicted in the Gate : for the Lord pleadeth their cause, and will spoil their soul that spoil them.* Prov. 22. 22. We see then, that the most just God will be revenged of these unmerciful Tyrants. He will not always put up these wrongs and injuries done to the poor.

In the eighth Chapter of the Prophet *Amos*, He swears by the excellency of Jacob, that he will never forget any of their works. And again he saith by his Prophet *Jeremy*, *Shall I not be avenged on such a Nation as this ?*

Surely he will set his face against them, to root them out of the earth. It is written in the book of Psalms, that God would set these fellows opposite against him, as a Butt to shoot at : that, *He will put them apart, and the strings of his Bow shall be made ready against their faces.* Psal. 21. 12. Be astonished at this, O ye heavens ; and tremble, O thou earth. Hear this,

O ye cruel Landlords, unmerciful Oppressors, and Blood-suckers of the earth. You may well be called Blood-suckers : For you suck the blood of many poor men, women, & children : you eat it, you drink it, you have it served in at your sumptuous tables every day, you swallow it up, and live by it. *The Wilderness giuss you and your children food : Job 24. 5.* That is, you live by robbing and murdering. But wo, wo unto you that ever you were born. For the blood of the oppressed, which ye have eaten and drunken, shall one day cry for speedy vengeance against you, as the blood of *Abel* cryed against *Cain*. Their blood shall witness against you in the day of judgment : and the tears of many poor starved children, orphans and widows, shall cry out against you. Was the Lord revenged of *Ahab* for his cruel and unjust dealing with poor *Naboth*, and shall he not be revenged of you ? *1 King. 21.* Did Dogs lap the blood of *Ahab* and shall you escape ? No, no : you shall not escape. The Lord will be a swift witness against you, as he saith in *Malachy*. Was the Lord angry with the rich of the people for oppressing the poor, *Mal. 3. 5.* So as the cry of the people, and of their wives, against their oppressors, was heard of the Almighty. *Neb 5.* And do you think you shall escape scot-free ? Doth not the like cause bring forth the like effect ? the like

like sin, the like punishment? Know therefore for certainty, that the Lord hath coffers full of vengeance against you, and one day he will unlock them, and bring them forth in the sight of all men.

Know also that the timber of your houses, & the stones of your walls, which you have built by oppression and blood, shall cry against you in the day of the Lords wrath, as the Prophet *Habakkuk* telleth you. *The stone* (saith he) *shall cry out of the wall; and the beam out of the timber shall answer,* Hab. 2. 11. Where the Prophet telleth you, That the walls of your houses built in blood, shall cry out loud and shrill, and play the Choristers in that behalf, so as they shall answer one another on either side. The one side singeth, Behold blood, the other, Behold murther. The one side, Behold deceit; the other, Behold cruelty. The one, Behold pillaging and polling; the other, Behold covetousness. The one, Behold robbery; the other, Behold perjury. And thus you see how the stones and timber of your houses shall descant upon you. And howsoever you put on your brazen brows, and harden your hearts against these threatnings of the most terrible God and Lord of Hosts, yet one day you shall (in spite of your hearts, will ye, nill ye) be brought forth into Judgment; you shall once come to your reckoning; you shall at last be apprehended,

ded, convicted, and arraigned at the Bar of Gods Tribunal Seat, before the great Judge of all the world. Then sentence shall pass against you, even that most dreadful sentence, *Go ye cursed into hell fire, there to be tormented with the Devil and his Angels for ever.* Mat. 25.

41. O then, wo, wo unto you : *For what shall it profit a man to win the whole world, and loose his own soul ?* saith our Lord Jesus. Surely, even as much, as if one should win a farthing, and lose an hundred thousand pounds. For if he shall be cast into hell fire which hath not given his own goods righteously gotten, as our Saviour avoucheth : where then shall he be cast that hath stollen other mens goods ? And if he shall be damned that hath not cloathed the naked ; what shall become of him that hath made naked them that were cloathed ? Oh, therefore repent in time, O ye cruel Oppressours : seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near ; visit the fatherless and widow in their distress ; deal mercifully with your Tennants : rack not your rents any more ; pinch not the poor souls for whom Christ dyed : pity them, I say, but pinch them not : deal kindly and friendly with them : remember your great accounts : consider the shortness of your days, and the vanity of your life : rent your hearts and not your cloaths : Turn unto the LORD with
all

all your heart, with weeping, wailing, and mourning : prevent GODS wrath with a sacrifice of tears : pacifie his anger with the calves of your lips, and with a contrite spirit : Be grieved for that which is past, and amend that which is to come : stand it out no more at the Swords point against God : for it will not boot you to strive ; he is too strong for you. Your only wisdom is to come in. Come in therefore, come in, ye rebellious generation : submit your selves to the great King : humble your selves under his mighty hand ; cast down your swords and targets : yeild unto our God. So shall you escape the vengeance to come : so shall God accept you, have mercy upon you, receive you to favour, grant you a general pardon for all your rebellions, and admit you into the number of his faithful and loyal subjects.

Phil. I conceive by divers speeches which you have alleged, that goods got by oppression and cruelty, will never prosper long. For oppressors coin their money upon their neighbours skins.

Theol. You have spoken a truth. For, as it hath been shewed before, that those goods which are got by swearing and lying, are cursed ; so all those that are got by oppression and violence are most cursed, Therefore the Lord saith by his Prophet Jeremy, As the Partridge gathers the Young which

he hath not brought forth; so he that gathers riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his dayes; and at his end, shall be a fool, and his name shall be written in the Earth, Jer. 17. 11.

Phil. Would to God our Magistrates and Governors would take speedy order for remedying these things, and for the redressing of such grievous enormities as are amongst us; or that they themselves would step in and deliver the oppressed from the hand of the oppressor.

Theol. Job was an excellent man for such matters. For it is said of him, that He brake the jaws of the unrighteous man, and pluckt the prey out of his teeth, Job. 29. 17. Where we see how Job was a means to deliver the innocent, and to pull the Lamb out of the Lyons claws. Moreover, it is written of him in the same Chapter, that the blessing of him that was ready to perish, came upon him, and that he caused the Widdows heart to rejoyce; and that he was the eye to the blind, the feet to the lame, and the father to the poor: and when he knew not the cause, he sought it out diligently. Job 29. 13. O what a notable man was this! O that we had many Jobs in these dayes! Wise Solomon doth most gravely advise us all to follow Job's example in this behalf. Deliver (saith he) them that are oppress'd and drawn to death: for shouldst thou withdraw

thy self from them which go down to the slaughter? Prov. 24. 12. Would to God this counsel were well weighed and practised among us.

Phil. I marvel much with what face these cruel oppressors can come before God in his holy Temple to pray, & offer up their sacrifices unto him, For we see, many of them, though they have such foul hands, and foul hearts, as we have heard; yet for all that, will most impudently presume to come to the Church and pray: or at least, when they are laid in their beds at nights, and half asleep, then will they mumble over their prayers, or be pattering some Pater-nosters.

Theol. Alas, alas, poor sou's! all that they do in matters of God's Worlhip, is but hypocrisie and dissimulation. For in truth they are not for God, they love him but from the teeth outward: their mouths are with him, but their hearts goes after covetousness, and their hands are full of blood. And therefore God doth both abhor them and their prayers. For, saith he, *Though they stretch out their hands, yet will I hide mine eyes from them: and though they make many prayers, yet will I not hear them. For their hands are full of blood;* Isa. 1. 15.

Moreover, the Holy Ghost saith, *He that turns away his ear from hearing the Law, even his*

his prayer is abominable, Prov. 28. 9. David saith, If I regard wickedness in my heart, God will not hear my prayer, Psal. 66. 18. Our Lord Jesus also affirmeth, that God hears not sinners, Joh. 9. 31. that is stubborn and careless sinners. So then, we may clearly see (by a'l these testimonies of holy Writ) what account God makes of the prayers of oppressors, and all prophan and ungodly men: namely, that he doth hate them and abhor them as loathsome and odious in his sight.

Phil. Now in conclusion, shew us the causes of oppression.

Theol. The Causes are these.

Cruelty.		An evil Conscience.
Covetousness.		
Hard-heartedness.		The Devil.

Phil. Let us hear also the remedies.

Theol. The remedies be these:

Pity.		A good Conscience.
Contentation.		Much prayer.
Tender affections.		

Phil. Now, Sir, you have at large uttered your mind concerning these gross corruptions of the World, and have plainly and evidently proved them to be the deadly poyson of the soul: so al_o, I pray you, satisfie us in this, whether

they be not hurtful also to the body, goods, and name.

Theol. I have dwelt the longer in these common Vices of the World, because almost all sorts of men are stained with one or other of them: and therefore they can never be enough spoken against. For the whole World lyeth in them, as St. John testifieth. 1 Joh. 5. 19. If men therefore could be recovered of these Diseases, no doubt there would be a ready passage made for the abundance of grace; and we should have a most flourishing Church and Common-wealth: but as long as these do lye in the way, there is small hope of greater mercies and blessings to be poured upon us; or that ever we shall come to have an inward Conversation with GOD. For these Vices blind our eyes, burthen our hearts, and (as the Prophet *Jeremy* saith, *Jer. 5. 25.*) hinder good things from us. But touching your Petition: I must needs grant, That as these Vices are the very bane of the soul, and most certain Signs of -Condemnation: so are they very dangerous to the Body, Goods, and Name: yea, and to the whole Land, both Church and Common-wealth.

Phil. Shew us out of the Scriptures what danger they bring to the body.

Theol. The Lord our God saith, that if we will

will not obey him, nor keep his Commandments; (but break his Covenant) he will appoint over us hasty Plagues, Consumptions, and the burning Ague, to consume the eyes, and to make the heart heavy, *Lev. 26. 16.* So also he saith, *Dent. 28. 21.* That if we will not obey his voice, to observe all his Commandments and Ordinances, that then he will make the Pestilence cleave unto us, until he have consumed us: that he will smite us with the fever, with the botch of Egypt, with the Emroids, with the Scab, and with the Itch, that also he will smite us with madness; and with blindness, and with astonishment of heart. So then you see what great evils the Lord threatens to inflict upon our bodies in this life for these and such like sins. But on the contrary, the Holy Ghost saith, *Fear God and depart from evil: so health shall be to thy navel, and moisture to thy bones, Prov. 3. 7. 8.*

Paul. What evil do these fore-named sins bring upon us in our goods and outward estate?

Theol. They cause God to curse us in all that we set hand unto, as plentifully appeareth in the fore-named Chapter: where the Lord saith thus: If thou wilt not obey the commandments of the Lord thy God, cursed shalt thou be in the Town, cursed also in the

Field; cursed shall be thy basket and thy store; cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy Land, and the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed also when thou goest out. The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, trouble, and shame, in all that thou settest thy hand unto. And further he saith, That he will break the staff of their bread; that ten women shall bake their bread in one Oven, and they shall deliver their bread again by weight, and they shall eat, and not be satisfied, Lev. 26. 26. You do therefore apparently see, that these sins will draw down God's wrath upon us, and all that we have.

Phil. *What hurt do those sins to our good name?*

Theol. They bring reproach, shame and infamy upon us, and cause us to be abhorred and contemned of all good men. They do utterly blot out our good name. For as virtue makes men honourable and reverend, so vice makes men vile and contemptible. This is set down where the Lord threatens Israel, 1 King. 9. 7. that for their sins and disobedience, he will make them a Proverb and common talk; yea, a reproach and astonishment among all people. In sundry other places of the Prophets he threatens, for their
sins,

fin, to make them a reproach, a shame, an hissing, and nodding of the head to all Nations, Ezek. 5. 15.

Phil. *I do verily thus think, that as sin generally doth stain every man's good name, which all are chary and tender of: so especially it doth blot those which are in high places, and of special note for learning, wijdome, and godlines.*

Theol. You have spoken most truly, and agreeable to the Scriptures. For the Scripture saith, Eccles. 10. 1. *As a dead flye canseth the Apothecaries Oyntment to stink: so doth a little folly him that is in estimation for wisdome and for honour.* Where Solomon saith, That if a flye get into the Apothecaries box of oyntment, and dye, and putrifie in it, she marreth it, though it be never so precious: even so, if a little sin get into the heart, & break out into the fore-head of a man of great fame, for some singular gifts, it will blur him, though he be never so excellent.

Phil. *Shew me this, I pray you, more plainly.*

Theol. We observe this, in all experience, that if a Noble man be a good man, and have many excellent parts in him, of courtesie, patience, humility, and love of Religion; yet if he be covetous, the common people will have their eye altogether upon that

and they will say, Such a man is a very good man, but for one thing; he is exceeding covetous, oppresseth poor men, and dealeth hardly with his Tenants, keepeth no House, doth little good in the Country where he dwelleth. And this is it that marreth all.

Moreover, let a Judge, a Justice, or a Magistrate, be endued with excellent gifts of prudence, policy, temperance, liberality, and knowledge in the Law: yet if they be given to anger, or taking of bribes, Oh how it will disgrace them amongst the people! for they will say, He is a worthy man indeed, but there is one thing in him, that marreth all: he is an exceeding angry and furious man, he is as angry as a wasp, he will be in a pelting chafe for every trifle: he will fret and fume if you do but blow upon him. And besides this, he is a very corrupt man: he is a great taker of bribes: he loveth well to be bribed: he will do any thing for bribes.

Furthermore, if any Preacher be a man of great gifts, the Common people will say of him: Oh, he is a worthy man indeed, an excellent Scholar, a profound Divine, a singular man in a Pulpit: but yet for all that, he hath a shrewd touch which marreth all; he is an exceeding proud man: he is as proud as *Lucifer*. He hath very great gifts indeed, but I warrant you he knoweth it well enough.

For

For he carryeth his crest very high, and looketh very sternly and disdainfully upon all other men. He is unmeasurably puffed up with over-weening, and thinketh that he toucheth the Clouds with his head. Thus therefore we see, how the dead flies marr all, and how some one sin doth disgrace a man that otherwise doth excel.

Phil. What is the cause why some one sin doth so blot and smut the most excellent men?

Theol. The reason hereof is, because such men are as a candle set on a candlestick, or rather upon a Scaffold or Mountain, for all men to behold and look upon. And sure it is, they have a thousand eyes upon them every day; and that not only gazing on them, but also prying very narrowly into them, to spy out the least mote; that they may make a Mountain of it. For, as in a clean white paper one little spot is soon espied, but in a piece of brown paper, twenty great blurs seant discerned: Even so in Noble-men, Judges, Magistrates, Justices, Preachers, and Professors, the least spot or speck is soon seen into; but among the baser sort, and most gross livers, a most nothing is espied or regarded.

Phil. Sith the eyes of all men are bent and fixed upon such men as are of some note, therefore they had need very heedfully to look to their steps, that they may take away all

advantage from them that seek it.

Theol. Yes verily : and furthermore, they had need to pray with *David* alwayes, *Direct my steps O Lord in thy Word ; and let no iniquity have dominion over me*, Psal. 119. 133. And again, *Order my goings, that my feet slip not : uphold me in my integrity*, Psal. 41. 12. For if such men be never so little given to swearing, to lying, to drink, or to women, it is espyed by and by : and therewithal their credit is cracked, their fame overcast, their glory eclipsed, and the date of their good name presently expired.

Phil. Now as you have shewed what great hurt these sins do bring upon our souls, bodies, goods, and name : so also, I pray you, shew what danger they bring upon the whole Land.

Theol. Questionless, they pull down the wrath of God upon us all, and give him just cause to break all in pieces, and utterly to subvert and overthrow the good estate both of Church and Common-wealth ; yea, to make a final Consumption and desolation of all. For they be the very fire-brands of God's wrath, and, as it were touch-wood to kindle his anger and indignation upon us. For the Apottle saith, Col. 3. 6. *For such things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.*

Phil. Declare unto us out of the Scriptures,
how

how the Lord in former times hath punished whole Nations and Kingdoms for these and such like sins.

Theol. In the fourth of *Hosea*, the Lord telleth his people, that he hath a controversie with the Inhabitants of the Land, *Hos.* 4. 1. (and the reason is added) because there was no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land. By swearing, lying, killing, stealing, and whoring, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the Land mourn; and every one that dwelleth therein shall be cut off.

Here then we see what it is that will incense God against us, and cause us all to mourn. So likewise the Lord threatneth by his Prophet *Amos*, that for the cruelty and oppression of the poor, he would plague the whole Land. Shall not the Land tremble for this, (saith the Lord) and every one mourn that dwells therein, *Amos* 8. 8.

Again, the Lord saith by the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Jer.* 7. 19, 20. Do they provoke me to anger, and not themselves to the confusion of their own faces? Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold mine anger and my wrath shall be poured upon this place, upon man and best, upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and not be quenched.

Again,

Again, the Lord saith, *Jer. 22. 5.* If ye will not hear these words, I swear by my self, (saith the Lord) that this House shall be waste, and I will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his Weapons, and they shall cut down thy chief Cedar-trees, and cast them into the fire.

Likewise the Lord threatneth by his Prophet Ezekiel, *Ezek. 5. 7, 8.* saying, Because you have not walked in my statutes, nor kept my judgments: therefore, behold, I, even I, come against thee, and will execute judgment in the midst of thee, even in the sight of the Nations; and I will do in thee that I never did before, neither will I do any more the like, because of all thine abominations. For in the midst of thee, the Fathers shall eat their Sons, and the Sons shall eat their Fathers. Again, by the same Prophet the Lord saith, *Ezek. 7. 23, to 27.* The Land is full of the judgment of blood, and the City full of cruelty. Wherefore I will bring the most wicked of the Heathen; and they shall possess their houses. I will also make the pomp of the mighty to cease, and the holy places shall be defiled. When destruction cometh, they shall seek peace, and not have it. Calamity shall be upon calamity, and rumor upon rumor. Then shall they seek a Vision of the Prophet: but the Law shall perish from the Priest, and counsel from

from the Ancient. The King shall mourn, and the Prince shall be cloathed with desolation, and the hands of the people in the Land shall be troubled. I will do unto them according unto their wayes, and according unto their judgment I will judge them: and they shall know that I am the Lord. Last of all, the Lord saith by his Prophet Jeremy, Hear O Earth: Behold, I will cause a plague to come upon this people, even the fruit of their own imaginations, because they have not taken heed to my words, and to my Law, but cast it off, Jer. 6. 19. Almost innumerable places to this purpose, are to be found in the writings of the Prophets: but these may suffice to prove the main point, to wit, that the just God doth punish whole Nations and Kingdoms for the sins and rebellions thereof.

Phil. Sith all these sins (for which the Lord did execute such universal punishments upon his own people) do abound, and overflow the Land, may we not justly fear some great plague to fall upon us? and the rather, because our transgressions do increase daily, and grow to a full height and ripeness; so as it seems, the harvest of Gods vengeance draweth near, and approacheth?

Theol. We may indeed justly fear and tremble. For if God spared not the Angels

that sinned, how shall he spare us? If he spared not his own people, what can we look for? If he spared not the natural branches, how shall he spare us that are wild by nature? are we better than they? Can we look to be spared, when they are punished? are not our sins as many and as great as theirs? Doth not the same cause bring forth the same effect? Is the Arm of the Lord shortned? Or is not God the same just God to punish sin now, that he was then? Yes, yes, assuredly. And therefore we have great cause to mourn and lament, to quake and tremble; because there is a naked sword of vengeance hanging over our heads. Thus did *Jeremy*, *Jer.* 4. 19. Thus did *Amos*, *Amos* 5. 16. Thus did *Habakkuk*, *Hab.* 3. 16. when they plainly saw the eminent wrath of God approaching upon the people of *Israel* and *Judah*.

Phil. I think we may the rather doubt and fear, because the punishment of these fore-named vices is neglected by the Magistrate. For commonly when they that bear the sword of Justice, do not draw it out to punish notorious offenders and malafactors, the Lord himself will take the matter into his own hands, and be revenged in his own person: which is most dreadful and dangerous. For it is a fearful thing to fall in the hands of the living God, *Heb.* 10. 31.

Theol. You

Theol. You have spoken a truth. For if those which are Gods Deputies and Vicegerents in the earth, do their duties faithfully in punishing vice, and maintaining virtue; in smiting the wicked, and favouring the godly: then assuredly evil shall be taken out of Israel, God's wrath prevented, and his judgments intercepted: as it is written, *Psal.* 106. 30. *Phineas* stood up and executed judgment, and the plague was stayed. But if they (for fear, favour, affection, gain, flattery, bribery, or any other sinister respect) will be too sparing and remiss in punishing of gross offenders, and be rather ready to smite the righteous, then do they exceedingly provoke Gods wrath against the Land, and against themselves,

Phil. One thing I do greatly lament: that there be either none at all, or very slender censures, either by the Civil or Ecclesiastical Authority, for divers of these fore-named vices: as pride, covetousness, oppression, lying, idleness, swearing, &c.

Theol. It is a thing to be lamented indeed. For where do we see a proud man punished, a covetous man punished, an oppressor punished, a swearer punished, a lyer punished, an idle person punished? Now because they know they cannot, or shall not be punished, therefore they are altogether hardened, and imbold-
ned

ned in their sins; as the wise man saith: *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the children of men are fully set in them to do evil.*

Phil. One thing I do much muse at, wherein also I desire to be further satisfied, viz. what is the cause, that under so Godly a Prince, so many good Lawes, and so much good Preaching and teaching, there should notwithstanding be such an excess and overflowing of sin in all Estates?

Theol. The causes hereof are divers and manifold. But I will nominate four especial ones in my judgement: The first is, mans natural corruption; which is so strong, as almost nothing can bridle it. The second is, ill presidents, and external provocations to evil. The third is, the want of teaching in many Congregations in the Land: by reason whereof, many know not sin to be sin. The last reason is, the corruption and negligence of some such as are in authority.

Phil. Doth not this inundation and overflowing of sin, with the impunity of the same, Prægnosticate great wrath against us?

Theol. Yes undoubtedly, as it hath in part been shewed before. And there be divers other presages of wrath, though not of the same kind, which be these. Unthankfulness
for

*Nine Predi- for the Gospel: The abuse of our
ctions, or long peace: Our secret Idolatries:
forefigns of Our general security: Our ripe-
wrath. ness in all sin: Our abuse of God's
mercy: Our abuse of his long patience: The
coldness of Professors: Our not profiting by
former judgements: as pestilence, famine,
death, and the shaking of the sword.*

*Phil. This last I take to be a special token of
approaching vengeance: that we have not pro-
fited by former warnings.*

*Theol. True indeed. For it is an ordinary
thing with God, when men will not profit by
mild corrections, and common punishments,
then to lay greater upon them. And when a
former trouble doth us no good, we are to fear
a final consuming trouble. For so we read in
the Prophecy of Hosea, that, at the first, God
was to Ephraim as a moth, and to Judah as rot-
tiness: Hosea 5. 12. but afterward, when
as they profited not by it, he was to Ephra-
im as a Lyon, and to Judah as a Lyons whelp.
So the Lord saith in another place, That if
they will not come in, and yield obedience at
the first call of his wrath, then he will punish
them seven times more: Lev. 26. 18. but if
they continue in their stubbornness, then he
threatneth to bring seven times more plagues
upon them, according to their sins. Ven. 21.
If by all these they would not be reformed,
but*

but walk stubbornly against him, then he threatneth, *Yet seventimes more for their sins*. Ver. 24. and the fourth time, *Yet seven times more*: Ver. 28. The proof hereof we have in the book of the *Judges*: where we read how the people of *Israel* for their sins were in subjection to the King of *Aram Naharaim* eight years, *Jud. 3. 8.* afterward because they profited nothing by it, but returned to their old sins, therefore they served *Eglon* King of *Moab* eighteen years, *Jude 3. 14.* After that again, for their new sins and provocations, the Lord gave them up into the hands of *Midian* seven years, *Jude 6. 1.* After all this, for the renewing of their sins, the Lord sold them into the hands of the *Philistines*, and the *Ammonites*, *Jude 10. 7. 8.* which did grievously vex and oppress them for the space of eighteen years. Last of all, we read, that when neither famine nor pestilence could cause them to return unto him, then he delivered them up to the Sword of their enemies, and held them in bondage and captivity three score and ten years. After all this, when they were delivered out of Captivity, and returned home safely to their own Nation, and enjoyed some good time of peace and rest, yet at last, they fell to the renewing of their sins: and therefore the Lord plagued them most grievously by the divided *Greek* Empire, even *Magog* and

and Egypt, Seleucia and Lagide, Ezek. 38. and that by the space almost of three hundred years. And this is it that the Prophet Hosea did fore-tell, Hos. 3. 4. that the children of Israel should remain many dayes without a King, and without a Prince; without an Offering, and without an Image, without an Ephod, and without a Teraphim.

Phil. You have very largely laid open this last token of vengeance: to wit, that God at the first doth but beat us upon the coat; but if we continue in sin, he will whip us on the bare skin: and if men will not yield at the first gentle strokes, then he will strike harder and harder, till he have broken our stout stomachs, and made our great hearts come down. Therefore it is good yielding at the first: for we shall get nothing for our sturdiness against him. We do but cause him to double his strokes, and strike us both side-long, and over-the-wart: for we cannot endure that we should grundle against him with stubborn sullenness. But now to the point. Sith there are so many presages and fore-signs of Goa's wrath, I pray you, shew what it is that stayeth the execution, and very down-fall of the same.

Theol. The prayers and tears of the faithful, are the special means that stay the hand of God from striking of us. For the prayers of the righteous are of great force with him;

him; even able to do all things. St. James saith, That the prayer of a righteous man availeth much, if it be fervent: Jam. 5. 16. and bringeth the example of Elias to prove it. For, saith he, Though Elias was a man subject to the like passions that we be, yet was he able by his prayers both to open and shut the Heavens. Abraham likewise prevailed so far with God by his prayers for Sodom, that if there had been but ten just men found in it, it had been spared Gen. 18. 32. The Almighty God saith by his Prophet, Jer. 15. 1. Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet mine affection could not be toward this people. Which doth plainly shew that Moses and Samuel might have done much with him, had he not been so fully bent against his people for their iniquities as he was. So likewise he saith in the Prophecie of Ezekiel, Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were amongst them, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, Ezek. 14. 14. Which also sheweth, that if there had been any possible entreating him for the Land, these three men might have done it, but now he was resolutely determined to the contrary. In respect herefore that the zealous Preachers, and true Professors of the Gospel, do so much prevail with God by their prayers, they are said to be the defence and strength of Kingdoms and Coun-

Countries, of Churches and Common-wealths as it is said of *Elijah*, that he was the Chariot of *Israel* and the Horsemen thereof; 2 King. 2. 12. *Elisha* also was environed with a Mountain full of Horses and Chariots of fire, 2 King. 6. 17. And sure it is, that *Elijah* and *Elisha* are not onely the Chariots and Horsemen of *Israel*, but also by their prayers they do cause God himself to be a wall of fire round about it: as the Lord saith by his Prophet, *Ezek.* 22. 30. *I sought for a man among them, that should make p the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the Land, that I might not destroy it: but I found none.* Which sheweth, that if there had been but some few to have stood in the breach, he would have spared the whole Land. This also appeareth more plainly in the Prophesie of *Jeremy*, *Jer.* 5. 1. where the Lord saith thus: *Run to and fro by the streets of Jerusalem; behold and enquire in the open places thereof, if you can find a man, or if there be any that excecuth judgment, and seeke h the truth, and I will spare it.* Oh then mark and consider, what a man may do: yea, what one man may do: what an *Abraham* may do: what a *Moses* may do: what an *Elijah* may do: what a *Daniel*, what a *Samuel*, what a *Job*, what a *Noah* may do!

Some one man (by reason of his high fa-

vour

The Plain Man's

your with the Eternal) is able sometimes
 to do more for a Land by his Prayers and
 Tears, than many prudent men by their coun-
 sel, or valiant men by their Swords. Yea, it
 doth evidently appear (in the sacred Volumn
 of the Holy Ghost) that some one poor Prea-
 cher, being full of the Spirit and power of
Elijah, doth more in his Study, (either for
 offence or defence: either for the turning away
 of Wrath, or the procuring of Mercy) than
 a Camp-Royal, even forty thousand strong:
 yea, (as the Spirit speaketh) *Cant. 3. 7.*
Though they all have their Swords girded to
their thighs, and be of the most valiant men of
Israel. And this is clearly proved in one verse
 of the Book of *Psalms*, where the Prophet,
 having reckoned up the sins of the people,
 addeth, *Therefore the Lord was minded to de-*
stroy them, had not Moses (his chosen) stood
in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he
should destroy them. Ps. 106. 23. See therefore
 what one man may do with God. Some one
 man doth so bind the hands of God, that when
 he would strike, he hath no power to do it: as
 it is said of *Lot*, *Gen. 19. 22. I can do no-*
thing till thou be come out. See how the Lord
 saith, *He can do nothing*, because he will do
 nothing: he doth wittingly, and willingly
 suffer his hands to be manacled, and bound
 behind him, for some fews sake, which he
 doth

doth make more account of, than all the World besides; so precious and dear are they in his sight. Likewise it is written, That the Lord was exceedingly incensed against the *Israelites* for their Idolatrous Calf which they made in *Horeb*; Yet he could do nothing, because *Moses* would not let him. Therefore he falleth to entreating of *Moses*, that *Moses* would let him alone, and entreat no more for them. *Oh* (saith the Lord to *Moses*) *Let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against this people, and that I may consume them,* *Exod. 32. 10.* Thus we see, that except *Lot* go out of the City, and *Moses* let him alone, he can do nothing. O the profoundness and altitude of Gods mercy toward mankind! O the height and depth, length and breadth of his mercy toward some! O that the most glorious and invisible GOD should so greatly respect the Sons of men! for what is man, that he should be mindful of him; or the Son of man, that he should regard him? Let us therefore that are the Lord's Remembrancers, give him no rest, nor let him alone, till we have some security, and good assurance from him, that he will turn away from us the wrath which we most justly have deserved; that he will spare us, and be merciful unto us. Yea, as the Prophet saith, *Isa. 62. 7. Let us never leave him, nor give him over,*

over, till he repair and set up Jerusalem the praise of the World: Lest for default hereof, that be charged upon us, which was charged upon the head of some of the Prophets in Israel, that they were like the Foxes in the waste places, that they had not risen up in the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the House of Israel. Ezek. 13. 4, 5. For now adays (alas) we have many hedge-breakers, few hedge-makers: many openers of gaps, few stoppers; many makers of breaches, to let in the floods of Gods wrath upon us, but very few that by true repentance go about to make up the breach, and to let down the sluices, that the guishing streams of God's vengeance may be stopp'd and stay'd.

Phil. I do now plainly see, that there be some in high favour with God, and as we say, greatly in his books: sith his love is so great unto them, that for their sake he spareth thousands.

Theol. It is written in the Proverbs of Solomon, that the righteous in a Land are the establishment of the King's Throne; and the wicked the overthrowing of the same. The words are these: Take away the dross from the silver, and there will proceed a Vessel for the finer. Take away the wicked from the King, and his Throne shall be established in righteousness, Prov. 25. 4, 5. Likewise in another

another place the *wise man* affirmeth, that the righteous are the strength and bulwarks of Cities, Towns and Corporations : but the wicked are the weakning and undoing of all. *Scornful men* (saith he) *set a City on fire : but the wise turn away wrath*, Prov. 29. 8. To this purpose, most excellent is that saying of *Eliphas* in *Job*, *The innocent shall deliver the Iſſue, and it shall be preserved by the pureness of their hands*, Job 22. 30. We read in the book of *Chronicles*, 2 Chro. 11. 14. 16, 17. That when the Levites and the Priests were cast out by *Jeroboam*, they came to *Jerusalem*, and all such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of *Israel* came with them. And then afterward it is said, they strengthened the Kingdom of *Judah*, and made *Rehoboam* the son of *Salomon* mighty. By all these testimonies it is evident, that Princes, Kingdoms, Cities, Towns and Villages, are fortified by the righteous therein : and for their sakes a so great Plagues are kept back : which thing, one of the Heathens did well see in ; as appeareth by his words, which are these : *When God meaneth well to a City, and will do it good, then he raiseth up good men : but when he meaneth to punish a City or a Country, and do ill unto it; then he taketh away the good men from it.*

Paul. It is very manifest, by all that you

have alledged, that the wicked fare the better, every day in the year, for the righteous that dwell amongst them.

Theol. All experience doth teach it, and the Scriptures do plentifully avouch it. For did not churlish *Laban* fare the better for *Jacob* his kinsman? *Gen.* 30. 27. Doth he not acknowledge that the Lord had blessed him for his sake? Did not *Potiphar* fare the better for godly *Joseph*? *Gen.* 39. 5. doth not the Scripture say, that the Lord blessed the *Egyptians* house for *Joseph* his sake? and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand? Did not *Obed-Edom* fare the better for the Ark, *2 Sam.* 6. 11. Did not the seventy and six souls that were in the ship with *Paul*, speed all the better for his sake? *Acts* 27. 24. Did not the Angel of God tell him in the night, that God had given unto him all that failed with him? for otherwise a thousand to one they had been all drownded. Therefore the children of God may very fitly be compared to a great piece of cork, which though it be cast into the Sea, having many nails fastened in it, yet it beareth them all up from sinking, which otherwise would sink of themselves. What shall we say then? or what shall we conclude, but that the ungodly are more beholden to the righteous than they are aware of?

Phil. I do think if it were not for God's children, it would go hard with the wicked. For if they were sorted and shoaled out from amongst them, and placed by themselves, what could they look for but wrath upon wrath, and plague upon plague, till the Lord had made a final consumption, and swept them like dung from the face of the earth?

Theol. Sure it is, all Creatures would frown upon them, the Sun would unwillingly shine upon them, or the Moon give them any light. The Stars would not be seen of them, and the Planets would hide themselves. The beasts would devour them. The fowls would pick out their eyes. The fishes would make war against them, and all creatures in Heaven and Earth would rise up in arms against them. Yea the Lord himself from Heaven would rain down fire and brimstone upon them.

Phil. Yet for all this, it is a wonder to consider how deadly the wicked hate the righteous, and almost in every thing oppose themselves against them, and that in a most virulent and spiteful manner. They rail and slander, scoff and scorn, mock and mow at them, as though they were not worthy to live upon the earth, They esteem every pelting Rascal, and prefer every vile Varlet before them, And though they have their lives and liberty, their bread and safety, and all that they have else

by them; yet for all that, they could be content to eat their heart with Garlick: so great, so fiery, so burning and hissing hot is their fury and malice against them.

Theol. They may very fitly be compared to a Moth that fretteth in pieces the same cloth wherein she is bred: or to a certain worm or canker, that corrodeth or eateth through the heart of the tree that nourisheth her: or unto a man that standeth upon a bough, in the top of a tree, where there is no more, and yet with an Ax choppeth it off, and therewithal falleth down with it, and breaketh his neck: Even so the fools of this world do what they can to chop asunder the bough that upholds them, but they may know easily what will follow.

Phil. I see plainly they be much their own foes, and stand in their own light; and indeed know not what they do. For the benefit which they receive by such, is exceeding great; and therefore by their maligning of them, they do but hold the stirrop to their own destruction.

Theol. Now to apply these things to ourselves, and to return to the first question of this argument: may we not marvel that our Nation is so long spared, considering that the sins thereof are so horrible and outrageous as they be?

Phil. We may justly marvel at the wonderful

ful patience of God: and we may well think that there be some in the Land which stand in the breach, being in no small favour with his Highness, sith they do much prevail.

Theol. The merciful preservation of our most gracious King, who is the breath of our nostrils, the long continuance of our Peace, and of the Gospel, the keeping back of the Sword out of the Land, which our sins pull upon us, the frustrating of many plots and subtil divices which have been often invented against our State, yea, and the life of his Majesties most Royal Person, make me to think, that there be some strong pleaders with God, for the publick good of us all.

Phil. You may well think so indeed: for by our sins we have forfeited, and dayly do forfeit into God's hands, both our King, our Country, our Peace, our Gospel, our Lives, our Goods, our Lands, our Livings, our Wives, our Children, and all that we have: But on'y the righteous (which are so near about the King, and in so high favor) do step in, and earnestly intreat for us, that the forfeitures may be released, and that we may have lease (in parley) of them all again, or at least, a grant of further time. But, I pray you, Sir, are not we to attribute something concerning our good Estate to the policy of the Land, the Laws established, and the wisdom and counsel of our prudent Governors?

Theol. Yes assuredly, very much, as the ordinary and outward means which God useth for our safety. For though the Apostle *Paul* had a grant from God for the safety of his own life, and all that were with him in the ship; yet he said, *Except the Marriners abide in the ship, we cannot be safe*, Acts 27. 31. Shewing thereby, that unto Faith and Prayers the best and wisest means must be joyned. We are therefore upon our knees every day, to give Thanks unto God for such good means of our safety as he hath given us.

Phil. Well then, as the prayers of the righteous have been hitherto great means both for the hindering and turning away of wrath, and the continuance of favor; so shew, I pray you, what is the best course to be taken, and what in sound wisdom is to be done, both to prevent future dangers and to continue God's Favors and mercies still upon us.

Theol. The best and surest course that I can consider or conceive of, is, To repent heartily for sins past, and to reform our lives in time to come; to seek the Lord while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is near; to forsake our own ways, and our own imaginations, and to turn unto him withal our hearts, with weeping, with fasting, & with mourning, as the Prophet *Joel* chap. 2. adviseth: *For our God is gracious and merciful; slow to anger,*

anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. All the Prophets do counsel us to follow this course, and do plainly teach, that if we all (from the highest to the lowest) do meet the Lord with unfeigned repentance, and offer him the sacrifice of a contrite spirit, undoubtedly he will be pacified towards us, and be merciful to our Transgressions. This is most plainly set down in the seventh Chapter of *Jeremy*, where the Lord saith thus to his people. *If you amend and redress your ways: and your works: If you execute judgement betwixt a man and his neighbor, and oppress not the stranger, the Fatherless and the Widdow, and shed no innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods, to your destruction: Then will I let you dwell in this place, even in the Land which I gave unto your fathers for ever and ever, Jer. 7. 5, 6.* So likewise he saith by the same Prophet, *Execute ye judgement and righteousness, and deliver the oppressed from the hand of the oppressor, and vex not the Fatherless, the Widdow, or the Strangers; do no violence, nor shed innocent blood in this place. For if you do this thing, then shall the King, sitting upon the Throne of David, enter in by the gates of this house, and ride upon Chariots, and upon Horses, both he and his servants, and his people, Jer. 22. 3, 4, 5.* And again, *O ye disobedient children, return and*

I will heal yo. r rebellion, Jer. 3. 22. The Lord
also saith by his Prophet Isaiah, If ye consent
and obey, ye shall eat the good things of the
Land: but if ye refuse, and be rebellious, ye
shall be devoured with the Sword. For the
mouth of the LORD hath spoken it, Esa. 1.
19. The Prophet Hosea saith, Come, let us
return to the Lord; for he hath spoiled, and
he will heal us; he hath wounded us, and he
will binde us up, Hos. 6. 1. And again, Hos.
13. 1. O Israel, return unto the LORD,
(for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity) and I
will heal thy rebellion, and will love thee freely:
for mine anger is turned away from thee. I will
be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the Lil-
ly, and fasten his root as the trees of Lebanon.
His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall
be as the Olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon.
The Prophet Micah telleth us what is good
for us, and what is our best course, and what
the Lord requireth at our hands, namely, these
four things, To do justice, to love Mercy, to hum-
ble our selves, and to walk with our God, Mic. 6.
8. The Prophet Amos giveth the same counsil,
saying, Seek the Lord, and ye shall live. Seek
good, and not evil. Hate the evil, and love
the good, and establish judgement in the gate.
It may be that the Lord of Hosts will be merci-
ful unto the remnant of Joseph, Amos 5. 3. 14,
15. And the Lord himself saith, If this Nation
against

against whom I have pronounced, turn from their wickedness, I will repent of the Plague I thought to bring upon them Jer. 18. 1. Thus we do plainly see what advice and counsel the Prophets & holy men of God, do give unto us. The summ of all is this, that if we do truly repent, and turn unto him with all our hearts, (studying to obey him, and walk in his ways) then he will grant us any favor that we will require at his hands. For even as a wool-pack, or other soft matter, beatech back, and dampeth the force of all shot; so penitent, melting, and soft hearts, do beat back the shot of Gods wrath, and turn away his vengeance from us. Moreover, we may observe, in all experience, that when Potentates are offended, or any great man hath conceived a displeasure against some poor man, then he must run and file, send presents, use his friends, break his sleep, and never be at quiet untill he have pacified him. Even so must we deal with our God, seeing he hath taken a displeasure against us. O therefore that we would speedily use all possible means to pacifie his wrath! O that we would with one heart and voyce every one of us (from the highest to the lowest) humble our selves before our God, forsake our former evil ways, be grieved for that we have done, and purpose never to do the like again. Oh that it might go to the hearts of us, that

we have so often and so grievously offended
 so loving a God, and so merciful a Father!
 Oh that we would awake once at last, and
 rowse up our drowfie hearts, and ransack our
 sleepy consciences, crying out against our
 sins, that our sins might never cry out against
 us! Oh that we would judge our selves, ac-
 cuse our selves, indite our selves, and condemn
 our selves! so should we never be adjudged,
 accused, indited, or condemned of the Lord.
 Oh that all hearts might sob, all souls might
 sigh, all loyns might be smitten with sorrow,
 all faces gather blackness, and every man
 smite himself on the thigh, saying, What
 have I done? Oh that both Magistraey, Mi-
 nistry, and Commonalty, would purpose that
 vow, and even take a bond of themselves; and
 from henceforth, and from this day forward,
 they would set their hearts to seek the Lord,
 and wtolly give up themselves to his obedi-
 ence! Oh that all men, women and children,
 would fear God, and keep his commandments,
 would eschew evil and do good: would study
 to please God in all things, and to be fruitful in
 all good works, making conscience to perform
 the duties of their general callings and duties
 of their special callings; duties of the first ta-
 ble, and duties of the second table; that so
 God might be sincerely worshipped, his Name
 truly revered, his Sabbaths religio ly ob-
 served;

served; and that every man would deal kindly, mercifully, justly, and uprightly with his neighbor, that there might be no complaining, no crying in our streets! Oh, I say, again and again, that if all of us, of what estate, degree, or condition soever, would walk in the paths of our God, then doubtless we should live & see good days, all future dangers should be prevented, our peace prolonged, our State established, our King preserved, and the Gospel continued. Then should we still enjoy our Lives, our Goods, our Lands, our Livings, our Wives, our Children, our Houses and Tenements, our Orchards and Gardens; yea, as the Prophet saith, we shall eat the good things of the Land, spend our days in much Comfort, Peace and Tranquility, and leave great blessings unto our children and posterity, from age to age, from generation to generation.

Phil. You have fully answered my question, and well satisfied me therein out of the Scriptures; yet, I pray you, give me leave to add one thing to that which you have at large set down. The Lord saith by the Prophet Amos, Amos 4. 6, 7, that for their sins and rebellions, he had given them cleanness of teeth, that is, dearth and scarcity; and yet they did not turn unto him. Also he withheld the Rain from them, and punished them with drought; and yet

yet they did not turn unto him. Moreover, he smote their Corn, their great Gardens, their Orchards, Vine-yards, Fig-trees, and Olive-trees, with blasting and mildew, and the Palmer-worm did devour them: and yet they did not return unto him. Last of all, he smote them with Pestilence, and with the Sword, and overthrew them, as he overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and they were as a fire-brand pluckt out of the burning: yet for all this, they did not turn unto him. Ye have not turned unto me, saith the Lord. But now to come to the point. Out of this I gather, that if we multiply our Transgressions, God will multiply his Plagues upon us: but on the contrary, if we would unfeignedly turn unto the Lord our God with all our hearts, all Plagues should be stayed, all dangers prevented, and no evil should fall upon us. For because they would not turn, therefore he smote them. If therefore they had turned, he would not have smote them. But now, I pray you, briefly conclude this point, and declare in few words what it is that doth most materially concern our peace and publick good.

Theol. These few then briefly I take to be the things which belong to our Peace.

Ten things concerning our Peace. Let Solomon execute Jacob and Shimei.

Le

Let *Achab* and *Elijah*, slay the Priests and Prophets of *Baal*.

Let *Aaron* and *Eleazer* minister before the Lord faithfully.

Let *Jonas* be cast out of the Ship.

Let *Moses* stand fast in the Gap, and not let down his hand.

Let *Joshua* succeed him.

Let *Cornelius* fear God with all his household.

Let *Tabitha* be full of good works and almes-deeds.

Let *Deborah* Judge long in *Israel*, prosper and be victorious.

Let us pray that the light of *Israel* may not be quenched.

And this I take to be the summ of all that belongs to our Peace.

Phil. The summ of all our conference hitherto, as I remember, may be reduced unto these few heads: First, man's natural corruption hath been laid open. Secondly, the horrible fruits thereof. Thirdly, their evil effects and workings, both against our souls and bodies, goods, name, and the whole Land. Lastly the remedies of all. Now therefore I would grow to some conclusion of that which you touched by the way, and made some mention of, namely, the signs of salvation and damnation; and declare unto us plainly, whether the state of a man

soul before God, may not by certain signs and tokens, be certainly discerned in this life.

Theol. Besides those which before have been mentioned, we may add these nine following :

Nine signs of a sound soul. Reverence of God's Name : keeping of his Sabbaths : Truth : Sobriety : Industry : Compassion : Humility : Chastity : Contentation.

Phil. These indeed, I grant, are very good signs, but yet all of them are not certain : for some of them may be in the reprobates.

Theol. What say you then to Saint Peters signs, set down in the first chapter of his second Epistle? which are these eight.

St Peters Eight signs of Salvation. Faith : Virtue : Knowledge : Temperance : Patience : Godliness : Brotherly kindness : Love.

Saint Peter saith, *If these be in us and abound, they will make us neither idle nor unfruitful in the knowledge our Lord Jesus,* 2 Pet. i. 8. which is as much, as if he had said, They will make us sound and sincere Professors of the Gospel.

Phil. All these I grant are exceeding good signs and evidences of a man's salvation; but yet some of them may deceive, and a hole may be picked in some of their evidences; I would therefore hear of some such demonstrative and infallible Evidences, as no Lawyer can find fault

fault with. For I hold that Divines can as perfectly judge of the assurance and evidences of man's salvation, as the best Lawyer can judge of the assurances and evidences, whereby men hold their lands and livings.

Theol. You have spoken truly in that. And would to God all the Lord's people would bring forth the Evidences of their Salvation, that we might discern of them.

Phil. Set down then, which be the most certain and infallible Evidences of a man's salvation; against which no exception can be taken.

Theol. I judge these to be most sound and infallible.

Seven infallible signs of Salvation.

Assured faith in the promises.

Sincerity of heart.

The Spirit of Adoption.

Sound Regeneration and Sanctification.

Inward peace.

Groundedness in the truth.

Continuance to the end.

Phil. Now you come near the quick indeed. For in my judgement, none of these can be found truly in any reprobate. Therefore I think no Divine can take exception against any of these.

Theol. No, I assure you, no more then a Lawyer.

Lawyer can finde fault with the Tenure of mens lands and fee-simples, when as both the title is good, and strong by Law; and the evidences thereof are sealed, subscribed, delivered, conveyed, and sufficient witness upon the same, and all other signes and ceremonies (in the delivering and taking possession thereof) according to strict Law observed.

For if a man have these forenamed evidences of his salvation, sure it is, his title and interest to heaven is good, by the Law of Moses and the Prophets, I mean the Word of God. God himself subscribed to them: Jesus Christ delivereth them as his own deed: the Holy Ghost sealeth unto them: yea, the three great Witnesses, which bear record in the earth, (that is, Water, Blood, and the Spirit) do all witness the same. *Act. 16. 31. Prov. 1. 20. Job. 1. 41. Rom. 8. 14. Job. 4. 23. 1 Thes. 4. 15. Rom. 5. 1. Col. 1. 23. Mar. 2. 12.*

Phil. Now you have very fully satisfied me touching this point. And one thing more I do gather out of all your speech, to wit, that you do think a man may be assured of his salvation even in this life.

Theol. I do think so indeed. For he that knoweth not in this life that he shall be saved, shall never be saved after this life. For John saith, Now we are made the Sons of God. 1 Jo. 2. 3.

Phil.

Phil. But because many doubt of this, and the Papists do altogether deny it, therefore, I pray you, confirm it unto us out of the Scriptures.

Theol. The Apostle saith. We know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be destroyed, we have a building given us of God; that is, an house not made with hands, but eternal in the Heavens, 2 Cor. 5. 1. Mark 11 at he saith, Both he and the rest of Gods people, did certainly know that Heaven was provided for them. For the Spirit of Adoption beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the Children of God, Rom. 8. 15, 16. And again, the same Apostle saith, From henceforth is laid up for me, the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but to all them that love his appearing, 2 Tim. 4. 8. Here we see, that he knew there was a crown prepared for him and for the Elect. And the same spirit which did assure it unto Paul, doth assure it also to all the children of God. For they have all the same spirit, though not in the same measure. St. John saith also, Herein we are sure we know him, if we keep his Commandments, 1 John 2. 3. In which words St. John telleth us thus much, that if we do unfeignedly endeavour to obey God, there is in us the true knowledge and fear of God; and consequently, we are sure we shall be saved.

Saint

Saint Peter saith, *Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. Wherefore should the Apostle exhort us to make our election sure, if none could be sure of it? In the second of the *Ephesians*, the Apostle saith flatly, that in *Christ Jesus we do already sit together in heavenly places*. His meaning is not that, *we are there already in possession*; but *we are as sure of it, as if we were there already*. The reasons hereof are these: Christ our head is in possession: Therefore he will draw all his members unto him, as he himself saith.

Secondly, we are as sure of the thing which we hope for, as of that which we have, but we are sure of that which we have, which is the work of grace: therefore we are sure of that we look for, which is the crown of Glory. Many other places of the holy Scriptures might be alledged to this purpose; but, I suppose, these may suffice, Joh. 12. 23. Joh. 14. 13.

Phil. *As you have shewed this by the Scriptures: So also shew it more plainly by evident reason out of the same.*

Theol. How can a man in truth call God his Father, (when he saith, *Our Father which art in Heaven*) and yet doubt whether he is his Father or no? For if God indeed be our father, and we his children, how can we per-
rishi?

fish? how can we be damned? will a father condemn his own Children? shall the children of God be condemned? No, no: *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8. 1.* Again, *Who can lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth who can condemn, Rom. 8. 33, 34.* It is therefore most certain and sure, that all such as do in truth call God their father, and have God for their father, shall be saved. Again, how can a man say in truth and feeling, that he believes the forgiveness of sins, and yet doubt whether he shall be saved? For if he be fully persuaded that his sins be forgiven, what letteth why he should not be saved? Moreover, as certainly as we know we are called, justified and sanctified: so certainly we know we shall be glorified. But we know the one certainly, and therefore the other.

Afun. I will never believe, that any man can certainly know, in this world, whether he shall be saved or damned, but all men must hope well, and be of a good belief.

Theol. Nay, we must go further then hope well: we may not venture our salvation upon uncertain hopes. As if a man should hope it would be a fair day to morrow: but he cannot certainly tell. No, no; we must in this case being of such infinite importance as it is, grow to some certainty and full resolution.

We

We see worldly men will be loath to hold their Lands and Leases uncertainly, having nothing to shew for them. They will not stand to the courtesie of their Land-lord, nor rest upon their good wills. They will not stay upon uncertain hopes. No, they are wiser then so. For the children of this world are wiser in their generation, then the children of light. They will be sure to have something to shew. They will have it under Seal. They will not stay upon the words and promises of the most honest men, and best Land-lords. They cannot be quiet till they have it in white and black, with sound counsel upon their Title, and every way made as sure unto them, as any Law of the Land can make it, *Luk. 16. 8.*

Are then the children of this world so wise in these inferior things, and shall not we be as wise in matters of ten thousand times more importance? Are they so wise for earth, and shall not we be as wise for heaven? Are they so wise for their bodies, and shall not we be as wise for our souls? Shall we hold the state of our immortal inheritance by hope-well, and have no writings, or evidences, no seal, no witnesses, nor any thing to shew for it? Alas! this is a weak Tenure, a broken Title, a simple hold indeed.

Asun. Yet for all that, a man cannot be certain.

Theolo

Theol. Yes, Saint John telleth us, we be certain. For he saith, *Hereby we know we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit,* 1 John 4. 13. He saith not we hope; but, we know certainly. For he that hath the Spirit of God, knoweth certainly he hath it; and he that hath faith, knoweth that he hath faith; and he that shall be saved, knoweth he shall be saved. For God doth not work so darkly in mens hearts by his Spirit, but that they may easily know whether it be of him or no, if they would make a due trial. Again, the same Apostle saith, *He that believeth in the Son of God, hath the witness in himself,* 1 Joh. 5. 10. That is, he hath certain testimonies in his own conscience, that he shall be saved. For we must fetch the warrant of our salvation from within our selves; even from the work of GOD within us. For look how much a man feeleth in himself the encrease of knowledge, obedience, and godliness, so much the more sure he is that he shall be saved. A man's own conscience is of great use this way, and will not lye or deceive. For so saith the wise man, *As water sheweth face to face, so doth the heart, man unto man,* Prover. 27. 19. That is, the mind and conscience of every man telleth him justly (though not perfectly) what he is. For the conscience will not lye; but accuse or excuse

a man, being instead of a thousand witnesses.

The Apostle saith, *No man knows the thing of man, but the spirit of man that is in him* 1 Cor. 2. 11. And again, the Scripture saith *Man's soul is as it were the candle of the Lord whereby he searched all the bowels of the belly* Prov. 20. 27. So then it is a clear case, that a man must have recourse to the work of God's grace within him, even in his own soul: and thereby he shall be certainly resolved one way or other. For even as *Rebecca* knew certainly, by the striving and stirring of the twins in the womb, that she was conceived and quick of child: so God's children know certainly by the motions and stirring of the Holy Ghost within them, that they have conceived Christ, and shall undoubtedly be saved.

Phil. *I pray you let us come to the ground-work of this certainty of salvation, and speak somewhat of that.*

Theol. The ground-work of our salvation is laid in God's eternal election; and, in respect thereof, it standeth fast and immoveable; as it is written, *The foundation of God standeth fast.* And again, *He is faithful that hath promised: Though we cannot believe, yet he abides faithful,* 2 Tim. 2. 19. 1 Thes. 5. 24. 2 Tim. 2. 13. So then, as we know it certainly in our selves, by the consequence of election:

lection: so it standeth most firm in respect of God, and his eternal and immutable decree. And a thousand infirmities (nay, all the sins of the world, nor all the devils in hell) cannot overthrow God's election. For our Lord Jesus saith *All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me.* And again, *This is the Fathers will that hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing; but should raise it up again at the last day,* Joh. 6. 37. And in another place our Saviour Christ saith, *My sheep hear my voice and I know them; and they follow me, & I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all: and none is able to take them out of my Fathers hand,* Joh. 10. 27. We ought therefore to be as sure of our salvation, as of any other thing which God hath promised, or which we are bound to believe. For to doubt thereof, in respect of God's Truth, is blasphemous against the immutability of his truth.

Phil., *But are there not some doubts, at some times, even in the very Elect, and in those which are grown to the greatest persuasion?*

Theol. Yes verily. For he that never doubted never believed. For whosoever believeth in truth, feeleth sometimes doubtings and waverings. Even as the sound body feeleth many

ny grudgings of diseases, which if he had no health, he could not feel: so the sound soul feeleth some doubtings, which if it were no sound, it could not so easily feel. For we feel not corruption by corruption, but we feel corruption by grace. And the more grace we have, the more quick we are in the feeling of corruption. Some men of tender skins, and quick feeling, will easily feel the lightest feather, in softest manner, laid upon the ball of their hands; which others, of more slow feeling and hard flesh, cannot so easily discern. So then it is certain, that although the children of God feel some doubtings at some times, yet the same do no whit impeach the certainty of their salvation; but rather argue a perfect soundness and health of their souls. For when such little grudgings are felt in the soul, the children of God oppose against them the certainty of God's Truth and promises, and so do easily overcome them. For the Lord's people need no more to fear them, then he that rides through the streets upon a lusty Gelding, with his sword by his side, needs to fear the barking & bauling of a few little curs, and Whappers.

Phil. Shew yet more plainly how or in what respect the child of GOD may both have doubtings, and yet be fully assured.

Ans. Even as a man set on the top of the highest steeple in the world, and so fast bound

unto it, that he cannot fall though he would, yet when he looketh downward, he feareth, because man's nature is not acquainted nor accustomed to mount so high in the Air, and to behold the Earth so far beneath: but when he looketh upward, and perceiveth himself fast bound, and out of all danger, then he casteth away all care. Even so, when we look downward to our selves, we have doubts and fears; but when we look upward to Christ, and the truth of his promises, we feel our selves secure, and cease to doubt any more.

Phil. Declare unto us what is the original of these doubts and fears, and from whence they spring in the children of God.

Theol. They spring from the imperfection of our regeneration, and from that strife which is in the very mind of the Elect, between faith and infidelity; For these two do mightily fight together in the most regenerate, and strive to over-master and over-shadow one another; by reason whereof, sometimes it cometh to pass, through the prevailing of unbelief, that the most excellent Servants of God, may fall into fits and pangs of despair, as *Job* and *David* in their temptations did. And even in these days also some of God's children at some times are shrewdly handled this way, and brought very low, even to death's door: but yet the Lord in great mercy doth recover them

both from total and final despair. Only they are humbled and tryed by these sharpe fits for a time, and that for their great good. For as we use to say, that an ague in a young man is a sign of health; so these burning fits of temptations in the Elect, for the most part, are signs of God's grace and favor. For if they were not of God, the Devil would never be so busie with them.

Phil. Is it not meer presumption, and an over-much trusting to our selves, to be persuaded of our salvation.

Theol. Nothing less. For the ground of this persuasion is not laid in our selves, or any thing within us, or without us, but only in the righteousness of Christ and the merciful promises of God. For is it any presumption for us, to believe that which God hath promised, Christ hath purchased, and the Holy Ghost hath sealed? No verily, it is not any presumption, but a thing which we all stand bound unto, as we will answer it at the dreadful day of Judgement. as for our selves, we do freely confess, that in God's sight we are but lumps of sin, and masses of misery, and cannot of our selves move hand or foot to the furtherance of our salvation. But being justified by faith, we are at peace with God, and fully persuaded of his love and favor towards us in Christ.

Phil. Cannot the reprobates and ungodly be assured of their salvation?

Theol. No. For the Prophet saith, *There is no peace to the wicked, Isa. 57. 22.* Then I reason thus: They which have not the inward peace, cannot be assured: But the wicked have not the inward peace, therefore they cannot be assured. Stedfast faith in the promises doth assure. But the wicked have not stedfast faith in the Promises: therefore they cannot be assured. The Spirit of adoption doth assure: But the wicked have not the spirit of adoption; therefore they cannot be assured.

To conclude: When a man feeleth in himself an evil conscience, blindness, profaneness, and disobedience, he shall in despite of his heart, sing this doleful Song, I know not whether I shall be saved or damned.

Phil. Is not the doctrine of the assurance of salvation a most comfortable doctrine.

Theol. Yes doubtless. For except a man be persuaded of the favor of God, and the forgiveness of Sins, and consequently of his Salvation, what comfort can he have in any thing? Besides this, the persuasion of God's love towards us, is the root of all our love and chearful obedience toward him: For therefore we love him, and obey him, because we know he hath loved us first, and written our names, in the Book of Life. * But on the contrary, that general do-

ctrine of the Papists, which would have men alwaies doubt and fear in a servile sort, is most hellish and uncomfortable. For so long as a man holds that, what encouragement can he have to serve God? what love to his Majesty? what hope in the promises? what comfort in trouble? what patience in adversity.

Antil. Touching this point, I am flat of your mind. For I think verily a man ought to be perswaded of his salvation: and for my own part I make no question of it. I hope to be saved as well as the best of them all. I am out of fear for that. For I have such a steadfast faith in God, that if there should be but two in the world saved, I hope I should be one of them.

Theol. You are very confident indeed; you are perswaded before you know. I would your ground were as good as your vain confidence. But who is so bold as blind Bayard? Your hope is but fancy, and as a sick man's dream. You hope you cannot tell what. You have no ground for what you say. For what hope can you have to be saved, when you walk in no path of salvation? what hope can a man have to come to London speedily, that travelleth nothing that way, but quite contrary? What hope can a man have to reap a good crop of corn, that useth no means,

means, neither ploweth, soweth, nor barroweth? What hope can a man have to be fat, and well liking of his body, that seldom or never eateth any meat? What hope can a man have to escape drowning, which leapeth into the Sea? Even so, what hope can you have to be saved, when you walk not in that way, when you use no means, when you do all things that are contrary to the same? For (alas!) there is nothing in you of those things which the Scriptures do affirm most be in all those that shall be saved. There be none of the fore-named signs and tokens in you. You are ignorant, prophane and careless. God is not worshipped under your roof. There is no true fear of God in your self, nor in your household. You seldom hear the Word preached. You content your self with an ignorant Minister. You have no prayers in your Family, no reading, no singing of Psalms, no instructions, exhortations admonitions, or any other Christian Exercises. You make no conscience of the observation of the Sabbath. You use not the Name of God with any Reverence. You break out sometimes into horrible Oaths and cursings. You make an ordinary matter of swearing by your Faith and your Troth. Your Wife is Irreligious, your Children dissolute and ungracious, your servants prophane and careless.

You are an example in your own house of all Atheism and conscienceless behaviour. You are a great Gamester, a Rioter, a spend-thrift, a Drinker, a common Alehouse-hunter, a Whore-hunter, and, to conclude, given to all Vice and Naughtiness. Now then, I pray you tell me, or rather let your conscience tell me, what hope can you have to be saved, so long as you walk and continue in this course? Doth not St. John say, *If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we are liars?* 1 John 1. 6. Doth not the same Apostle avouch, that such as say they know God, and keep not his Commandments, are liars? 1 John 2. 4.

Again doth he not say, *He that committeth sin is of the Devil?* 1 John 3. 8. And, *whosoever doth not Righteousness, is not of God?* Doth not our Lord Jesus flatly tell the Jews, (which bragged that Abraham was their Father) that they were of their Father the Devil? because they did his works? Doth not the Apostle Paul say, *His servants we are to whom we obey, whether it be of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?* Rom. 6. 16. Doth not the Scripture say, *He that doth righteousness, is righteous?* 1 John 3, 7. Doth not our Lord Jesus affirm, that, *Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven,*

ven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven? *Mat 7. 21.* Therefore I conclude, that forasmuch as your whole course is carnal, careless and dissolute, you can have no warrantable hope to be saved.

Phil. I do verily think that this man's case (which you now have laid open) is the case of thousands.

Theol. Yea, doubtless, of thousand thousands, the more is the pity.

Asun. Soft and fair, Sir, you are very round indeed. Soft fire maketh sweet Malt, I hope you know we must be saved by mercy, and not by merit. If I could do all my self, wherefore serveth Christ? I hope that which I cannot do, he will do for me: And I hope to be saved by Jesus Christ, as well as the best of you all.

Theol. Oh, now I see which way the game goeth. You would fain make Christ a cloak for your sins. You will sin that grace may abound. You will sin frankly, and set all upon Christ's score. Truly, there be many thousands of your mind, hearing of God's abundant mercy in Christ; are thereby made more bold to sin. But they shall know one day to their cost, what it is to abuse the mercy of GOD. The Apostle saith, *The mercy and loving kindness of God, should lead us to repentance, Rom. 2. 4.* But we see it leads

many to further hardness of heart. The Prophet saith, *With him is mercy, that he may be feared, Psal. 130.4.* But many are thereby made more secure and careless. But to come nearer to the mark: You say you hope to be saved by Jesus Christ. I answer, if those things be found in you which the Scripture avoucheth to be in all that shall be saved by him, then you may have good confidence, and assured hope, otherwise not. Now the Scriptures do thus determine it, and set it down, that if a man be in Christ, and look to be saved by him, he must be endued with these qualities following:

1. He must be a new creature, *1 Cor. 5. 17.*
2. He must live, not after the lusts of men, but after the will of God, *1 Pet. 4. 2.*
3. He must be zealous of good works, *Tit. 2. 14.*
4. He must dye to sin, and live to righteousness, *Rom. 6. 14.*
5. He must be holy and unblamable, *Col. 1. 22.*
6. He must so walk as Christ hath walked, *1 John 2. 6.*
7. He must crucifie the flesh with the affections and lusts, *Gal. 5. 24.*

8. He

*Nine things
required of
all that
shall be sa-
ved in
Christ.*

8. He must walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, *Rom. 8.1.*

9. Last of all, he must serve God in righteousness and true holiness all the days of his life, *Luke 1. 75.*

Lo then what things are required of all that shall be saved by Christ. Now therefore if these things be in you in some measure of truth, then your hope is currant, sound and good; otherwise it is nothing worth. For in vain do man say, They hope to be saved by Christ, when as they walk dissolutely. The reason hereof is, because the Members must be futable to the Head, but Christ our Head is Holy, therefore we his Members must be Holy also: as it is written, *Be ye holy, for I am holy, 1 Pet. 1. 16.* Otherwise, if we will joyn profane and ungodly Members to our holy Head Christ, then we make Christ a Monster. As if a man should joyn unto the Head of a Lion, the neck of a Bear, the body of a Wolf, and the legs of a Fox, were it not a monstrous thing: would it not make a monstrous creature? Even such a thing they go about, which would have Swearers, Drunkards, Whoremongers, and such like to be Members of Christ, and to have life and salvation by him. But sith you do so much presume on Christ, I pray you let me ask you a question.

Antil. What is that?

Theol. How do you know that Christ dyed for you particularly and by name?

Antil. Christ dyed for all men, and therefore for me.

Theol. But all men shall not be saved by Christ. How therefore do you know that you are one of them that have special interest in Christ, and shall be saved by his death?

Antil. This I know, we are all sinners, and cannot be saved by any other then by Christ.

Theol. Answer directly to my question. How do you know in your self, and for your self, that you are one of the Elect, and one of those for whom Christ dyed?

Antil. I know it by my good faith in God because I put my whole trust in him, and in none other.

Theol. But how know you, that you have faith? or how shall a man know his faith?

Antil. I know it by this, that I have always had as good a meaning, and as good a faith to God-ward, as any man of my calling, and it not bock-learned, I have always feared God with all my heart, and served him with my prayers.

Theol. Tush, now you go about the bush, and hover in the air: answer me to the point. How do you know certainly, & assuredly, that Christ dyed for you particularly & by name?

An. il. You would make a man mad. You put me out of my faith; you drive me from Christ. But if you go about to drive me from Christ, I will never believe you. For I know we must be saved onely by him.

Theol. I go not about to drive you from Christ, but to drive you to Christ. For how can I drive you from Christ, seeing you never came near him? How can I drive you out of Christ, seeing you were never in him? But this it is, that deceiveth you and many others, that you think you believe in Christ, because you say you believe in Christ: as though faith consisted in words; or as though a man had faith, because he saith so. If every one that saith he hath faith, therefore hath faith; and every one that saith he believeth Christ, doth therefore believe; then who will not have faith? who will not believe? But in very deed, your faith, and the faith of many others, is nothing else but meer imagination. But all this while you have not answered my question touching your particular knowledge of Christ.

An. il. I can answer you no otherwise then I have answered you. And I think I have answered you sufficiently.

Theol. No, no: you fault in your speech; your answer is not worth the button: you speak you wot not what, you are altogether ~~stogge~~ and benighted in this question.

But

But if there were in your heart the true knowledge and lively feeling of God, Then I am sure you would have yielded another and a better answer: then you would have spoken something from the sense and feeling of your own heart, and from the work of God's grace within you. But because you can yield no sound reason that Christ dyed for you particularly, and by name, therefore I suspect you are none of them, which have proper interest in him, and in whom his death takes effect indeed.

Phil. I think this question would gravel a great number: and few there be that can it aright.

Theol. It is most certain, I know it by lamentable experience, that not one of a hundred can soundly and sufficiently answer this question, none indeed, but only those in whom the new work is wrought, and do by the inward work of the Spirit feel Christ to be theirs. I have talked with some, which were both witty, sensible and learned, who notwithstanding, when they have been brought to this very point and issue, have stuck sore at it, and staggered very much. And howsoever they might by wit and learning shuffle it over, and in a blundering sort speak reason, yet they had no feeling of that which they said, and therefore no assurance; and

quently, as good never a whit, as never the better. It is the sanctifying Spirit, that giveth feeling in this point: and therefore without the feeling of the operation of the same Spirit, it can never be soundly answered. Thus then, I do close up this whole matter: As the Vine branch cannot live and bring forth fruit, except it abide in the Vine; no more can we, except we abide in Christ, and be truly grafted in him by a lively faith: None can have any benefit by him: but they only which dwell in him: None can live by Christ, but they which are changed into Christ: none are partakers of his body, but they which are in his body: None can be saved by Christ crucified, but they which are crucified with Christ: None can live with him being dead, but those which die with him being alive. Therefore let us root downward in mortification, that we may shoot upward in Sanctification: let us die to sin, that we may live to righteousness, let us die while we are alive, that we may live when we are dead.

Asun. If none can be saved by Christ, but onely those which are so qualified as you speak of, then Lord have mercy upon us; then the way to heaven is very strait indeed, and few at all shall be saved. For there be few such in the world.

Theol. You are no whit therein deceived. For when all comes to all, it is most certain, that few shall be saved: Which thing I will shew unto you both by Scripture, reasons and examples.

Theol. First then, let us hear it proved by the Scriptures.

Theol. Our Lord Jesus saith, *Enter in at the strait gate.* For it is the wide gate, and broad way that leads to destruction; and many there be which go in thereat: because the gate is strait, and the way narrow, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it, *Mat. 7. 13.* Again, he saith, *Many are called, but few are chosen, Mat. 20. 16.* In another place we read of a certain man which came to our Saviour Christ, and asked him of purpose, whether few should be saved: To whom our Saviour answered thus: *Strive to enter in at the strait gate.* For many (I say unto you) will seek to enter in, and shall not be able, *Luke 13. 24.* In which answer, albeit our Saviour doth not answer directly to his question, either negatively or affirmatively; yet doth he plainly insinuate by his speeches, that few shall be saved. For first, he bids us strive earnestly, noting thereby, that it is a matter of great grief against the world, the Flesh, and the Devil. Secondly, he affirmeth, that the gate is very strait; noting that none

can enter in without vehement crowding, and almost breaking their shoulder-bones. Lastly, he saith, That many which seek to enter in, shall not be able; noting thereby, that even of them that seek, many shall step short, because they seek him not aright. *Esaia* also saith, *Except the Lord of Hosts had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and had been like to Gomorrah.* *Esa.* 1.9. The Apostle also alledgeth out of the Prophet, that the Lord will make a short account in the earth, and gather it into a short sum with righteousness, *Ro.* 9.28. *Esa.* 10.22. These Scriptures, I think, are sufficient to prove that few shall be saved?

Asun. Now let us hear your reasons.

Theol. If we come to reason, we may rather wonder that any should be saved, then that few shall be saved. For we have all the lets and hinderances that may be, both within us and without us. We have (as they say) the Sun, Moon, and seven Stars against us. We have all the Devils in Hell against us, with all their horns, heads, marvelous strength, infinite wiles, cunning devices, deep sleights, and methodical temptations. Here runs a sore stream against us. Then have we this present evil world against us, with her innumerable baits, snails, nets, gins, and grins, to catch us, fetter us, and entangle us.

Here

Here we have profits and pleasures, riches and honour, wealth and preferment, ambition and covetousness. Here comes a Camp-Royal of spiritual and invisible enemies. Lastly, we have our flesh, that is, our corrupted nature, against us; we have our selves against our selves. For we our selves are as great enemies to salvation, as either the world or the Devil. For our Understanding, Reason, Will, & Affections, are altogether against us. Our natural wisdom is an enemy unto us. Our concupiscences and lusts, do minister strength to Satans temptations. They are all in league with Satan against us. They take part with him in every thing against us, and our salvation. They fight all under his standard, and receive their pay of him. This then goeth hard on our side, that the Devil hath an inward part against us, and we carry always within us our greatest enemy, which is ever ready day and night, to betray us into the hands of Satan; yea, to unbolt the door, and let him in to cut our throats. Here then we see an huge army of dreadful enemies, and a very legion of Devils, lying in ambush against our souls. Are not we therefore poor wretches in a most pitiful case, which are thus betrayed and besieged on every side? All things then considered, may we not justly marvel that any shall be saved? For who seeth

ot, who knoweth not, thousand thousands
 e carried headlong to destruction, either
 ith the temptations of the world, the flesh,
 r the Devil? But yet further, I will shew by
 another very manifest and apparent reason, that
 he number of God's Elect upon the face of
 he Earth, are very few in comparison: which
 may thus be considered: First, let there be
 taken from amongst us all treacherous Papists,
 Atheists, and Hereticks. Secondly, let there
 be shoaled out all vicious and notorious Evil-
 vers; as Swearers, Drunkards, Whore-
 mongers, Worldlings, Deceivers, Coufeners,
 Proud men, Rioters, Gamesters, and all the
 profane multitude. Thirdly, Let there be
 refused and sorted out, all hypocrites carnal
 Protestants, vain Professors, Back-sliders,
 Deceivers, and cold Christians. Let all these
 say, be separated, and then tell me how many
 sound, sincere, faithful and zealous worship-
 ers of God, will be found amongst us. I
 suppose we should not need the Art of Arith-
 metick to number them. For I think there
 would be very few in every Village, Town
 and City; I doubt they would walk very
 thinly in the streets, so as a man might easily
 tell them as they go. Our Lord Jesus asks a
 question in the Gospel of St. Luke, saying,
Do you think when the Son of man cometh, that
he shall find faith on the earth? Luke 18. 8.

To

To which we may answer, Surely very little.

Phil. Now according to your promise, shew this thing also by examples.

Theol. In the first age of the World, all flesh had so corrupted their ways, that God could no longer bear them, but even vowed their destruction by the over-flowing of Waters. When the flood came, how few were found faithful? Eight persons only were saved by the Ark. How few righteous were found in *Sodom*, and the Cities adjoyning. But one poor *Lot* and his Family. How few Believers were found in *Jericho*? But one *Rahab*. How few of the old *Israelites* entered into the Land of Promise? But two, *Caleb* and *Joshua*; the rest could not enter in, because of their unbelief, *Heb.* 3. 19. The true and visible Church was small, during the government of the Judges, as appeareth plentifully in that Book. In *Elijah's* time, the Church was so small, that it did not appear. In the reign of the Kings of *Israel* and *Judah*, the sincere worshipers were very few, as appeareth by all the Prophets. *1 Kin.* 20. 27. During the Captivity, the Church was as the Moon under a cloud she was driven into the wilderness, where she hid her self. During the persecutions of the Greek Empire, by *Cog*, *Magog* and *Egypt*, they were fewest of all. In *Christ's* time, what

lit. what a silly company did he begin withal? How were all things corrupted by the Priests, scribes and Pharisees? In the beginning of the Apostles preaching, there were but few Believers. After the first six hundred years, what an Eclipse was in the Church, during the height of Antichrist's Reign? How few true Worshippers of G O D were in the world, for the space almost of seven hundred years? Since the Gospel was broached and speard abroad, how few do believe? And as the Prophet saith, *Lord, who hath believed our report*, Esa. 53. 1. Thus then you see it is apparent, (both by Scripture, reason and examples of all Ages) that the number of the Elect is very small, and when all comes to all, few shall be saved.

Phil. *I pray you tell us how few, and to what scantling they may be reduced; whether one of an hundred, or one of a thousand shall be saved?*

Theol. No man knows that, neither can I give you any direct and certain answer unto it. But I say, that in comparison of the Reprobate, there shall but a few be saved. For all that profess the Gospel, are not the Church before God. There be many in the Church, which are not of the Church.

Phil. *How do you prove that?*

Theol. Out of the ninth to the Romans, where the Apostle saith, *All are not Israel, that are*

of Israel, Rom. 9. 6. And again, Esay cryeth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel were as the sand of the Sea, yet but a remnant shall be saved, Rom. 9. 27.

Phil. How do you balance it in the visible Church, or in what comparison do you take it? let us hear some estimate of it. Some think one of an hundred, some, but one of a thousand shall be saved.

Theol. Indeed I have heard some learned and godly Divines give such conjectures: but for that matter I can lay nothing to it. But only let us observe the comparison of the Holy Ghost betwixt a remnant and the sand of the Sea, and it will give some light into the matter, Rom. 9. 27.

Phil. Doth not the knowledge of this doctrine discourage men from seeking after God?

Theol. Nothing less: but rather it ought to awake and stir up in us a greater care of our salvation, that we may be in the number of Christ's little flock, which make an end of their salvation in fear and trembling, Phil. 2.

12.

Phil. Some make light of all these matters, Others say, As for the life to come, that is the least matter of an hundred to be cared for. As for that matter, they will leave it to God, even as pleaseth him: they will not meddle with it.

cry it. For they say, God that made them, must save them. They hope they shall do as well as others, and make as good shift as their neighbors.

Theol. It is lamentable that men should be so careless, and make so light of that which (of all other things) is most weighty and important. For what shall it profit a man though he should win the whole world, if he lose his soul? as the Author of all Wisdom testifieth, Mat. 16. 26.

Antil. I pray you, Sir, under correction, give me leave to speake my mind in this point. I am an ignorant man, pardon me, if I speake amiss: for a fools bolt is soon shot.

Theol. Say on.

Antil. I do verily think that God is stronger then the Devil. Therefore I cannot believe that he will suffer the Devil to have more than himself. He will not rake it at his hands. He loveth mankind better then so.

Theol. You do carnally imagine, that God will wrestle and strive with the Devil about the matter. As for God's power, it doth never cross his Will; for God can do nothing against his Will and Decree, because he will not.

Asun. Yea, but the Scripture saith, God will have all men saved.

Theol. That is not meant of every particular man, but of all sorts some; some Jews, some

some Gentiles; some rich, some poor; some high, some low, &c.

Asun. Christ dyed for all; therefore all shall be saved.

Theol. Christ dyed for all in sufficiency of his death, but not in efficacy unto life. For only the Elect shall be saved by his death: as it is written, *This is my Blood in the New Testament, which is given for you, Luk. 22. 20.* Meaning his Disciples and chosen children. And again, Christ being consecrated is made the *Author of salvation to all that obey him.*

Asun. God is merciful, and therefore I hope he will save the greatest part for his mercy sake.

Theol. The greatest part shall perish: but all that shall be saved, shall be saved by his mercy: as it is written, *He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth, Rom. 9. 18.* And again, *It is not in him that willeth, or in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy.* Therefore though God be infinite in mercy, and Christ infinite in merit, yet none shall have mercy, but only the vessels of mercy.

Antil. Can you tell who shall be saved, and who shall be damned? Do you know God's secrets? When were you in Heaven? When spake you with God? I am of the mind that all

men

men shall be saved. For God's mercy is above all his works. Say you what you will, and what you can, God did not make us to condemn us.

Theol. You are very peremptory indeed : you are more bold then wise ; for Christ saith. Few shall be saved ; you say, All shall be saved, whether then shall we believe Christ or you ?

Antil. If there should come two souls, one from Heaven, and another from Hell, and bring us certain news how the case stood, then I would believe it indeed.

Theol. Put case two souls of the dead should come, the one from Heaven, the other from Hell, I can tell you before hand certainly what they would say, and what news they would bring.

Antil. What I pray you ?

Theol. They would say, There be few in Heaven, and many in Hell : Heaven is empty, and Hell is full.

Antil. How know you that ? how know you they would say so ?

Theol. I am sure if they speak the truth, they must needs say so.

Antil. Must they needs ? why I pray you, must they needs ?

Theol. Because the Word of God saith so. Because Moses and the Prophets say so. If you

you will not believe *Moses* and the *Prophets*, neither will you believe though one, though two, though an hundred should rise from the dead.

Antil. Yes, but I would.

Theol. I pray you let me ask you a question whether do you think that God and his word, or the souls of dead men, are more to be credited?

Antil. If I were sure that God said so, then I would believe it.

Theol. If his Word say so, doth not he say so? Is not he and his word all one?

Antil. Yet for all that, if I might hear God himself speak it, it would move me much.

Theol. You shew your self to be a notable Infidel. You will not believe God's Word without signs and miracles, and wonders from the dead.

Antil. You speak as though you knew certainly that Hell is full: you do but speak at random, you cannot tell, you were never there to see. But for mine own part, I believe there is no Hell at all, but only the hell of a man's conscience.

Theol. Now you shew your self in kind what you are. You say you believe no hell at all. And, I think if you were well examined, you believe no Heaven at all, neither God nor Devil.

Antil.

Antil. Yes, I believe there is a Heaven, because I see it with mine eyes.

Theol. You will believe no more belike then you see: but, blessed is he that believeth, and seeth not, John 20. 29. You are one of the rankest Atheists that ever I talked withal.

Antil. You ought not to judge, you know not mens hearts.

Theol. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, Mat. 2. 34. You have sufficiently bewrayed your heart by your words: for the Tongue is the Key of the mind. As for judging, I judge you only by your fruits: which is lawful. For we may justly say it is a bad tree which bringeth forth bad fruit: and he that doth wickedly, is a wicked man. But it is you, and such as you are, that will take upon you to judge mens hearts: for though a mans outward actions be religious and honest, yet you will condemn him. And if a man give himself to the Word and Prayer, reform his Family, and abstain from the gross sins of the world, you will by and by say, He is an Hyopocrite. And thus you take upon you to judge mens hearts, as though you knew with what affection these things are done.

Antil. I confess I am a sinner, and so are all other for ought I know. There is no man but he may be amended. I pray God send us all

of his grace, that we may please him, and go to Heaven at the last.

Theol. Now you would shuffle up all together, as though you were as good as the best, and as though there were no difference of sinners: but you must learn to know that there is a great difference of sinners, for there is the penitent and impenitent sinner; the careful & the careless sinner; the sinner whose sins are not imputed; the sinner that shall be saved, and the sinner that shall not be saved, and the sinner that shall be damned. For it is one thing to sin of frailty, another thing to live in it, dwell in it, & trade in it, and (as the holy Ghost speaketh) to suck it in, as the fish sucketh water, and to draw it unto us with cart-ropes and cords of vanity, *Esay* 5. 18.

To conclude therefore: there is as great difference betwixt a sinner and a sinner as betwixt light and darkness. For though God's Children be sinners in respect of the remnants of sin within them, yet the Scriptures call them Just and Righteous, because they are justified by Christ, and sanctified by his grace and holy Spirit. And for this cause it is, that *St. John* saith, *He that is born of God sinneth not*, 1 *John* 4. 6.

Antil. What I pray you, did you never sin?

Theol. Yes, and what then? what are you the better?

Antil.

Antil. You Preachers cannot agree amongst your selves: one saith one thing, and another saith another, so that you bring the ignorant people into a hammering, and they know not on which hand to take.

Theol. The Preachers God be thanked, agree very well together in all the main grounds of Religion, and principal points of salvation. But if they dissent in some other matters, you are to try the spirits whether they be of God or no. You must try all things, and keep that which is good.

Antil. How can plain and simple men try the spirits and Doctrines of the Preachers?

Theol. Yes, for the Apostle saith, The spiritual man discerneth all things, 1 Cor. 2. 15. And St. John saith to the holy Christians. You have received an ointment from that holy One, and know all things, 1. John 2. 20. That is, all things necessary to salvation. Those therefore which have the Spirit of God, can judge and discern of Doctrines, whether they be of God or no.

Antil. I am not Book-learned, and therefore I cannot judge of such matters; As for hearing of Sermons, I have no leisure to go to them, I have somewhat else to do. Let them that are bookish, and hear so many Sermons, Judge of such matters; for I will not meddle with them, they belong not unto me.

Theol. Yet for all that you ought to read the Scriptures, and hear the VVord of God preached, that you may be able to discern betwixt truth and fallhood in matters of Religion.

Antil. *Belike you think none can be saved without preaching, and that all men stand bound to frequent Sermons: but I am not of your mind in that.*

Theol. Our Lord Jesus saith, *My sheep hear my voice*, Joh. 10. 16. And again he saith, *He that is of God heareth Gods Word*, John 8. 47. Ye therefore hear it not, because ye are not of God. You see therefore how Jesus Christ maketh it a special note of God's children to hear his VVord preached.

Antil. *But I think we may serve God well enough without a Preacher. For Preachers are but men, and what can they do? as Preacher is a good man so long as he is in the Pulpit; but if he be out of the Pulpit, he is but another man.*

Theol. You speak contemptuously of God's Messengers, and of Gods sacred Ordinance. But the Apostle doth fully answer your Objection, saying *Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*, Rom. 10. 17. and how can they hear without a Preacher? In which words the Apostle tells you flatly, that you can never have faith, nor serve God aright without Preaching.

Antil.

Antil. When you have preached all that you can, you can make the Word of God no better then it is; and some put in and put out what they list. The Scriptures are but mens inventions, and they made the Scriptures.

Theol. We preach not to make the word better, but to make you better. As for putting in and putting out, it is a meer untruth. And whereas you say the Scriptures were made by men, it is Blasphemy once to think it; and you are worthy to receive your answer at *Ti-burn*.

Antil. Now I see you are hot. I perceive for all your godliness, you will be angry.

Theol. I take it to be no sin to be angry against sin. For your sin is very great, and who can bear it?

Antil. All this while you speak much for preaching, but you say nothing for prayer. I think there is as much need of prayer as preaching. For I find in the Scriptures, Pray continually; but I find not, Preach continually.

Theol. No man denieth but that Prayer is most needful, always to be joyned unto Preaching, and all other Holy Exercises: for it is the hand-maid to all. But yet we prefer Preaching above it, because Preaching is both the Director and whet-stone of Prayer; yea it steereth us aright in all spiritual actions and

services whatsoever: without the which we can keep no certain course, but are ever ready to erre on this hand or that. Now whereas you say you find, *Pray continually*, but not *Preach continually*, you might (if you were not wilfully blind) find also, *Preach continually*, 2 Tim. 4. 2. for the Apostle saith, *Be instant, preach the Word in season and out of season*; that is, always; as time and occasion shall serve.

Antil. You extol preaching, but you say nothing for reading. I believe you condemn reading.

Theol. Doth he that highly commendeth Gold, condemn Silver? I do ingeniously confess, that both publick and private reading of the Scriptures, is very necessary and profitable, and would to God it were more used then it is, for it is of singular use, both to increase knowledge and judgment, and also to make us more fit to hear the Word preached. For such men as are altogether ignorant of the History of the Bible, can hear the Word with small comfort.

Phil. It seems that this man neither regards the one nor the other: because, for ought that I can see, he cares not greatly if the Scriptures were burnt.

Antil. Oh, Sirrah, you speak very improperly, you may speak when you are bidden.

Who

Path-way to Heaven.

Who made you a judge? you are one of his Disciples, and that maketh you to speak of his side.

Phil. No Sir, I hope I am Christ's Disciple, and no mans. But assuredly I cannot hold my peace at your vile caviling, and most blasphemous speeches.

Antil. I cry you mercy, Sir, you seem to be one of the Scripture-men: you are of the Spirit: you are so full of it, that it runneth out at your nostrils.

Phil. You do plainly shew your self to be a scoffing Ishmaelite.

Antil. And you do plainly shew your self to be one of the folk of God which know their seats in Heaven.

Phil. I pray God be merciful unto you, and give you a better heart: for I see you are in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

Antil. You think there is none good but such as your self, and such as can please your humour. You will forsooth, be all pure. But by God there be a company of pure knaves of you.

Theol. Now you do manifestly shew of what spirit you are of. For you both swear and rail with one breath.

Antil. God forgive me. Why did he anger me then? There be a company of such con-

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The Plain Man's

troublers as he in the world, that no body can be quiet for them.

Theol. I perceive a little thing will anger you, sith you be angry with him for speaking the truth.

Antil. What hath he to do with me? He is more busie then needs. Why doth he say I am in a bad case? I will not come to him to learn my duty. If I have faults, he shall not answer for them. I shall answer for mine own faults, and every Fat shall stand on his own bottom. Let him meddle with that he hath to do withal.

Theol. You are too impatient: you take matters at the worst. We ought friendly, and in love, to admonish one another: for we must have a care one of anothers salvation. I dare say for him, that he speaks both out of love and compassion towards you.

Antil. I care not for such love. Let him keep it to himself. What doth he think of me? doth he suppose that I have not a soul to save as well as he? or that I have no care of my salvation? I would he should know, that I have as great care of my salvation as he, though I make not such outward shews: for all is not Gold that glisters; I have as good a meaning as he, though I cannot utter it.

Theol. These words might well be spared; I hope you will be pacified and amend your
your

your life, and draw near to God hereafter.

Antil. Truly Sir, you may think of me what you please; but I assure you, I have more care that way, then all the world wonders at: I thank God for it, I say my prayers every night when I am in my bed; and if good prayers will do us no good, God help us. I have always served God duely and truely, and had him in my mind. I do as I would be done to. I keep my Church, and tend my prayers while I am there; and I hope I am not so bad as this fellow would make me. I am sure if I be bad, I am not the worst in the world, there be as bad as I. If I go to Hell, I shall have fellows, and make as good shift as others.

Theol. You think you have spoken wisely, but I like not your answer. For your words smell strongly both of ignorance, pride and unbelief. For first, you justify your self in your faithless and ignorant worship of God. And secondly, you justify your self by comparison with others, because others are as bad as you, and you are not the worst in the world.

Antil. Now I know you speak of ill will: for you never had a good opinion of me.

Theol. I would I could have as good an opinion of you as I do desire, and that I might see that wro:ight in you, which might draw

draw my love and liking towards you. And as for ill will, the Lord knoweth I bear you none. I desire your conversion and salvation with my whole heart, and I would think my self happy if I might save your soul with the loss of my right arm.

Antil. I hope I may repent. For the Scripture saith, At what time soever a sinner doth repent, God will have mercy on him. Therefore if I may have space and grace, and time to repent before death, and ask God forgiveness, and say my prayers, and cry God mercy, I hope I shall do well enough.

Theol. You speak as though Repentance were in your power, and at your commandment; and that you can put it into your own heart when you list; and that makes you, and many others presume of it three hours before death. But you must know, that Repentance is the rare gift of GOD, and it is given but to a few. For God will know him well, that he bestoweth Repentance upon; such it is proper only to the Elect. It is no worldly matter. It is not attained without many and frequent Prayers, and much hearing, reading, and meditating in the Word of God. It is not so easie a matter to come by as the world judgeth, it is not found but of them that seek it diligently, and begg it earnestly. It is no ordinary three hours matter. Cry God mercy

a little for fashion, will not do it. Cursory saying of a few Prayers a little before death, availeth not. For though true repentance be never too late, yet late repentance is seldom true. Herein delays are dangerous: for the longer we defer it, the worse is our case. The farther a nail is driven in with a hammer, the harder it is to get out again. The longer a disease is let run, the harder it is to cure. The deeper a Tree is rooted, the harder it is to pluck up again. The longer we defer the time of our repentance, the harder it will be to repent. And therefore it is dangerous driving it off to the last cast. For an ancient Father *Augustine*, saith; *We read but of one that repented at the last, that no man should presume; and yet of one, that none might despair.*

Well then, to conclude this point; I would have you to know that the present time is always the time of Repentance: For time past cannot be recovered, and time to come is uncertain.

Antil. Sir, in my opinion you have uttered some very dangerous things, and such as were enough to drive a man to despair.

Theal. What be they, I pray you?

Antil. There be divers things. But one thing doth most of all stick in my stomack, and that is the small number that shall be saved, as you say. But I can hardly be persuaded that

God

God made so many thousands to cast them away when he had done. Do you think that God hath made us to condemn us? Will you make him to be the Author of condemnation.

Theol. Nothing less. For God is not the cause of mens condemnation, but themselves. For every man's destruction cometh of himself: as it is written, *O Israel thy destruction is of thy self, Hos. 13. 9.* As for God, he doth (in great mercy) use all possible means to save sou's, as he saith by the Prophet, *What could I have done more to my Vineyard, that I have not done unto it? Esai. 5. 4.* But to come near to your question: I deny that God hath created the most part of men only and solely unto perdition, as the proper end which he did aim at in creating them, but he hath created all things for the praise of his glory: as it is written, *He hath created all things for himself, and the wicked also for the evil day, Prov. 16. 4.* Then it followeth, that the cause and end why the wicked were created, neither was nor is the only destruction of his creature, but his own praise and glory: that that only might appear and shine forth in all his works. Yet certain it is, that God for just causes (albeit unknown and hid to us) hath rejected a great part of men: The causes, I say, of reprobation are hid in the eternal counsel of GOD and known to his gods.

godly wisdom only. They are secret, and hid from us, reserved in his eternal wisdom to be revealed at the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus. *His Judgments* (saith the Scripture) *are as a great deep, and his ways past finding out, Rom. II. 33. Psa. 36. 6.* It is as possible for us to comprehend the Ocean in a little dish, as to comprehend the reason of God's counsel in this behalf.

Antil. *What reason, justice, or equity is there, that sentence of death should be passed upon men before they be born, and before they have done good or evil.*

Theol. I told you before, that we can never comprehend the reason of God's proceeding in this behalf, yet we must know, that his will is the rule of righteousness, and must be unto us instead of a thousand reasons. For whatsoever God willeth, in as much as he willeth it, it is to be holden just; we cannot conceive the reason of many natural things, and things subject to sense, as the motion of the celestial bodies, their unconceivable swiftness, their matter and substance, their magnitude, altitude, and latitude. We cannot thoroughly find out the causes of the Thunder, Lightning, Winds, Earth-quakes, ebbings and flowings of the Sea, and many other things under the Sun, how then can we possibly ascend up into the Privy-Chamber and Counsel-

Counsel-house of God, to sift and search out the bottom of God's secrets, which no wit or reach of man can any way attain unto? Let us therefore learn in GOD'S fear to reverence that which we cannot in this life comprehend. This one thing I must say unto you, that whatsoever God decreeth, yet doth he execute no man till he hath ten thousand times deserved it. For betwixt the decree and the execution thereof, cometh sin in us, and most just causes of condemnation.

Antil. If God have decreed mens destruction, what can they do withal? who resist his will? why then is he angry with us? For all things must needs come to pass according to his decree and determination.

Theol. First, I answer you with the Apostle. O man, who art thou that pleadest against God? Shall the thing formed, say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power of the clay, to make of the same lump, one vessel to honor, and another dishonor, Rom. 9. 20. Moreover, I answer, that God's decree doth not enforce the will of man, which worketh and moveth of it self. It hath in it self the beginning of evil motion, and sinneth willingly. Therefore though the decree of God imposeth a necessity upon all secondary causes; (so as they must needs be framed and disposed according

to the same) yet no co-action or constraint, for they are all carried with their voluntary motion. Even as we see the plumb of a clock, being the first mover, doth cause all the other wheels to move; but not to move this way or that way; for in that they move some one way, and some another, it is of themselves: I mean, of their own frame: so God's decree doth move all secondary causes, but takes not away their own proper motion. For God is the Author of every action, but not of any evil in any action. As the soul of man is the original cause of all motion in man, as the Philosophers dispute, but yet not of lame and impotent motion, for that is from another cause, to wit, some defect in the body. So I say, God's Decree is the root and first cause of motion, but not of defective motion, that is from our selves. Likewise, that a Bell soundeth, the cause is in him that ringeth it; but that it jarreth, the cause is in it self. Again, that an instrument soundeth, is in him that playeth upon it; but that it jarreth, is in it self; that is, in its own want of tuning. So then to shut up this point; all Instruments and middle causes are so moved of GOD, being the first mover, that he always doth will holily and justly in his moving. But the Instruments moved are carried in contrary motions, according to their own nature and frame:

frame : If they be good, they are carried unto that which is good : but if they be evil, they are carried unto evil. So that according to the double beginning of motion and will, there is a double and divers work and effect.

Antil. But from whence comes it that man of himself, that is, of his own free motion, doth will that which is evil ?

Theol. From the fall of *Adam*, whereby his will was corrupted.

Antil. What was the cause of *Adam's* fall ?

Theol. The Devil, and the depravation of his own will.

Antil. How could his will incline unto evil, it being made good, and he being made good ?

Theol. He and his will were made good, yet mutably good. For to be immutably good, is proper only to God. And *Adam* did so stand, that he might fall ; as the event declared.

Antil. Was not the Decree of God the cause of *Adam's* fall ?

Theol. No ; but the voluntary inclination of his will unto evil. For *Adam's* will was neither forced, nor by any violence of God's purpose, compelled to consent : but he of a free will and ready mind left God, and joyned with the Devil,

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Thus then I do determine, That *Adam* sinned necessarily, if you respect the decree or event: but if you respect the first mover and inherent cause, which was his own will, then he sinned voluntarily and contingently. For the decree of God did not take away his will, nor the contingency thereof, but only order and dispose it. Therefore (as a learned Writer *Beza* saith) *Volens peccavit, & propria motu; He sinned willingly and of his own motion.*

And therefore no evil is to be attributed unto God, or his decree.

Antil. *How then do you conceive and consider of the purpose of God in all these things?*

Theol. Thus: that God decreed with himself, *uno actu*, at once, That there should be a world: That *Adam* should be created perfect: That he should fall of himself: That all should fall with him: That he would save some of the lost race: That he would do it of mercy through his Son: That he would condemn others for sin.

Antil. *How do you prove the decree of reprobation; to wit, that God hath determined the destruction of thousands before the world was?*

Theol. The Scripture calleth the Reprobates, *The vessels of wrath prepared to destruction.*

tion, Rom, 9. 22. The Scripture saith, God hath not appointed us unto wrath, 1 Thes. 9. Therefore it followeth that some are appointed unto wrath. The Scripture saith of the Reprobates, That they were even ordained to stumble at the Word, 1 Pet. 2. 8. The Scripture saith, They were of old ordained to this condemnation. Jude 4.

Antil. But how answer you this? God will not the death of a sinner; therefore he hath predestinated none to destruction, Ezek. 18. 32.

Theol. God wills not the death of a sinner simply and absolutely, as it is the destruction of his creature; but as it is a means to declare his justice, and to set forth his glory.

Antil. God did fore-see and fore-know that the wicked would perish through their own sin: but yet he did not predestinate them unto it.

Theol. God's pre-science and fore-knowledge cannot be separated from his decree. For whatsoever God hath fore-seen and fore-known in his eternal counsel, he hath determined the same shall come to pass. For as it appertains to his wisdom to fore-know and fore-see all things: so doth it appertain to his power to moderate and rule all things according to his will.

Antil. What do you call pre-science in God?

Theol.

Theol. Prescience in God, is that whereby all things abide present before his eyes : so that to his eternal knowledge, nothing is past, nothing to come ; but all things are always present : and they are so present, that they are not as conceived imaginations, forms and motions ; but all things are always so present before God, that he doth behold them in their verity and perfection.

Antil. How can God justly determine of mens destruction, before they have sinned ?

Theol. This objection hath been answered in part before : for I told you, that God condemneth none but for sin, either original only, or else, both original and actual. For howsoever he doth in himself, before all time, determine the reprobation of many, yet he proceeds to no execution till there be found in us both just deserts, and apparent cause. Therefore they deal unsoundly and foolishly, which confound the Decree of reprobation with damnation it self ; sith sin is the cause of the one, and only by the will of God of the other.

Phil. Well Sir, sith we are so far proceeded in this question, by the occasion of this mans Objections and Cavils, I pray you now, as you have spoken much of Reprobation, and the causes thereof ; so let us hear somewhat of Election, and the causes thereof ; and shew us out
of

of the Scriptures, that God hath before worlds chosen some to eternal life.

Theol. Touching the decree of Election there are almost none that make any doubt thereof: therefore small proof shall serve for this point. Only I will confirm it by one or two testimonies out of Holy Scripture. First the Apostle saith, blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in Heavenly things in CHRIST, as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love. Ephes. 1. 3, 4. You see the words are very plain and pregnant for this purpose. Another confirmation was taken out of the eighth Chapter of the Romans, these words: Those whom he knew before, and he also predestinate to be like to the image of his own Son, that he might be the first-born of many brethren.

Phil. Which be the causes of Election?

Theol. The causes of Election are to be found only in God himself. For his eternal Election dependeth neither upon man, neither yet upon any thing that is in man, but is purposed in himself, and established in Christ, in whom we are Elected. This is fully proved in these words: Who hath predestinated us to be adopted through Jesus Christ in himself, according

ording to the good pleasure of his will, to raise his glory, wherewith he hath made us freely accepted in his beloved, Eph. 1. 5, 6. Where we see the Apostle telleth us, that his free grace, and the good pleasure of his will, are the first motives or moving cause of our Election.

Phil. But the Papists fetch the first motive of Election out of mans merits, and fore-seen works. For, say they, God did fore-see who would repent, believe, and do well; and therefore he made choice of them.

Theol. But they are greatly deceived: For I say again and again, that there is nothing in us which did ever move God to set his love upon us, and to chuse us unto life: but he ever found the original cause in himself, *Deut.* 7. 7. as it is written, *He will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth,* *Ro.* 9. 18. And again, *It is neither in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth: but in God that sheweth mercy,* *Rom.* 9. 16. The Lord himself testifieth, that he did chuse his people not for any respect in them, but only because he loved them, and bare a special favour unto them. So then it is a certain truth, that God's eternal predestination, excludeth all merits of man, and all power of his will, thereby to attain unto eternal life: and that his free mercy and undeserved favor

is

is both the beginning, the midst, and the end of our salvation: that is to say, All is of him, and nothing of our selves.

Antil. Whether then doth faith depend upon Election, or election upon faith? That is, whether did God chuse us, because we do believe? or whether do we believe, because we are chosen?

Theol. Out of all doubt, both faith and the fruits of faith do depend upon Election, for therefore we believe, because we are elected, and not therefore elected, because we believe. As it is written, *Act. 13. 48.* So many were ordained to Everlasting life, believed.

Antil. If men be predestinated before they be born, to what purpose serve all precepts, admonitions, laws, &c? It forceth not how we live. For neither our godly or ungodly life can alter the purpose of God.

Theol. This is a very wicked and carnal objection, and sheweth a vile and dissolute mind in them that use it. But I could wish such men to consider the end of Election, which is that we should lead a godly life: as it is plainly set down in the first Chapter to the *Ephesians*, ver. 4. where the Apostle saith, God hath chosen us before the foundation of the world. But to what end? that we should live as we list? No, no, saith he; But that

that we should be holy and unblameable before
 him. Again he saith, We are predestinated
 to be made like the image of his Son, that is, to be
 holy and righteous, Ro. 8. 29. For most certain it
 is, that we can judge nothing of predestination,
 but by the consequences : that is, by our call-
 ing, justification, and sanctification. For when
 once we feel the work of grace within us, (that
 is, that we are washed by the new birth, and
 renewed by the holy Ghost, finding in our
 selves an unfeigned hatred of sin, and love of
 righteousness) then are we sure, and out of
 all doubt, that we are predestinated to life.
 And it is even as much as if GOD had perso-
 nally appeared unto us, and whispered us in
 the ear, and told us that our names are taken,
 and written in the Book of Life. For *whom he*
hath predestinated, them he hath called : and
whom he hath called, them he hath justified :
and whom he hath justified, them he hath glo-
rified, Ro. 8. 30. Now therefore till we feel
 these marks of election wrought in us, we can
 be at no certainty in this point ; neither are
 we to take any notice of it, or to meddle in it :
 but we must strive, according to that power
 and faculty we have, to live honestly and ci-
 villy, waiting when GOD will have mercy
 on us, and give us the true touch. As for
 them that are careless and dissolute, setting all
 at six and seven, there is small hope that
 they

they are Elected, of ever shall be called.
ed.

Antil. I think the preaching and publishing of this Doctrine of predestination, hath done much hurt : and it had been good it had never been known to the people, but utterly concealed. For some it driveth to despair, and others it maketh more secure and careless.

Theol. You are in a great error : for this Doctrine is part of God's revealed Truth which he would have known to his people. And in good sooth, it is of very great and comfortable use to the children of God, against all the assaults of the Devil, and temptations of desparation whatsoever. For when a man hath once in truth felt by the effects, that God hath chosen him to life, then though the Devil lie sore at him, and the conscience of sin and his own frailties do vehemently assault him ; yet he knoweth certainly that the eternal purpose and counsel of GOD is immutable, and that because his Salvation is not grounded upon himself, or his own strength, but upon the unchangeable Decree of GOD, which is a foundation, immoveable and alway standing sure and firm : therefore do the Devil and sin what they can, yet he shall be upheld in righteousness and truth, and even (as it were) born in the arms of God
even

even to the end. For whom God loveth, to the end he loveth them. Moreover, when once the Lords people perceive (by their sanctification and new birth) both that the Lord hath rejected and reprobated so many thousand thousands, and made choice of them to be heirs of his most glorious Kingdom, being in themselves of the same mould and making that others are, and that he hath done all this of his free grace and undeserved mercy towards them: Oh how doth it ravish their hearts with the love of him! Again, how frankly and cheerfully do they serve him! how willingly and faithfully do they obey him! Yea, how are they wholly wrapt and enflamed with the desire of him! For it is the perswasion and feeling of God's love towards us, that draweth up our love to him again: as St. John saith, 1 John 4. *We love him, because he hath loved us first.*

Moreover, it is said of *Mary Magdalen*, Luke 7. 47. that she loved much, because much was forgiven, for after she felt her many and great sins freely pardoned, her affections were kindled with the love and obedience of Christ. So likewise the Church in the *Canticles*, Cant 2. 5. after she had been in the banquetting house of all spiritual grace and felt the banner of Christ's love displayed

upon her, forthwith she was wraped therewith, and cryed out (as it were in a swoon) that she was lick of love, *Cant. 5. 4.* So again, when Christ put in his hand by the hole of the door (that is, touched the very inward parts of her heart by his spirit) then her heart yerned, and her bowels were affectioned towards him. This is it which *St. Paul* prayed for upon his knees, *Eph. 3. 18, 19.* that it may be granted to the *Ephesians*, that they may be able to comprehend with all the Saints, what is the breadth and length, height and depth of Gods love towards us, and to know the love of Christ, (which passeth knowledge) and to be filled with all fulness of God. Thus then you see the great and comfortable use of this Doctrine of Election, both in that it ministreth strength and comfort against all temptations, as also because it constraineth us to love G O D, and of very love to fear him, and obey him.

Phil. Well, Sir, I think now you have spent time enough in answering the Objections and Cavils of Antilegon. In all which I do observe one thing, that there is no end of cavilling and objecting against the truth: and that a man may object more in an hour, than a learned man can well answer in a day.

Theol. You say truth. And the reason hereof is, because men have sin in them out of measure, and the Spirit of God but in measure. Therefore they can by the one, object and conceive more against the truth, then by the other they shall be able to answer, and say for it.

Phil. It appeareth indeed, that errors be infinite, and objections innumerable, and that there is no end of mens cavilling, against God's sacred truth. It is good for us therefore to be thoroughly settled in the truth, that we be not intangled, or snaired with any cavils, or sophistications whatsoever. And I do verily think (notwithstanding all his objections and exceptions) that he doth in his conscience desire, with Balaam, to dye the death of the Righteous, and to be as one of them whom he seemeth to despise.

Theol. I am so perswaded too. For this is the triumph that vertue hath over vice, That where she is most hated, there she is often desired and wished for. And this is that great punishment which God bringeth upon the wicked; *Virtutem ut videant intabescantque relicta*, as saith the Poet; That they shall see vertue, and pine away, having no power to follow it.

Phil. But now let us return to the point we were in hand with, before we fell into these

Objections and Cavils : which was, concerning the small number that shall be saved: and as you have shewed us many reasons thereof, so proceed to speak yet more unto that point.

Theol. As I have shewed you of sundry lets, both within us and without us, which do keep us back from God, and hold us fast in our sins; so now, unto all that hath been said before, I will add nine great hinderances unto eternal life, which may not unfitly be termed nine bars out of Heaven, and nine gates into Hell.

Phil. Which be they?

Theol. They be these.

Infidelity: presumption of Gods mercy: Examples of the multitude: Long custom of sin: Long escaping off punishment: Hope of long life: conceitedness: Ill company: Evil examples of ministers.

Phil. These indeed be strong bars out of Heaven, and wide gates into Hell. I pray you therefore prove them out of the Scriptures, and lay them forth somewhat more largely.

Theol. The first, which is infidelity, is proved out of the fourth Chapter to the Hebrews, verse 2. where it is written, *Unto us was the Gospel preached, as unto them: but the word which they heard, profited them not, because it was not mixed with faith in those that*

that heard it. And again, *They could not enter in, because of unbelief*, Heb. 3. 19. Here we see that unbelief did bar out the old people from entring into the Land of Promise, which was a figure of God's eternal Kingdom. And sure it is, that the same unbelief doth bar out thousands of us. For many will believe nothing but their own phanlies. They will not believe the Word of God, especially when it is contrary to their lusts and likings, profits and pleasures. Though things be manifestly proved to their faces, and both the Chapter and the Verse shewed them, yet will they not believe; for though they say they believe, yet will they never go about the practise of any thing, but reply against GOD in all their actions. And, for the most part, when God saith one thing, they will say another: when God saith Yea, they shall say Nay, and so give God the lye. Some again will say, *If all be true that the Preachers say, then God help us.* Thus you see how infidelity doth bar men out of Heaven, and cast them into Hell.

Phil. *Let us hear of the second gate, which is, presumption of Gods mercy.*

Theol. This is set down in the 29 Chapter of Deuteronomy, where the Lord saith thus: *When a man heareth the words of this curse, and yet flattereth himself in his heart, saying,*

I shall have peace, although I walk according to the stubbornness of mine own heart, thus adding drunkenness to thirst, (that is, one sin to another) the Lord will not be merciful unto him, but the wrath of the Lord, and his jealousy, shall smite against that man, and every curse that is written in this Book, shall light upon him, and the Lord shall put out his name from under Heaven.

Here we see how the mighty God doth thunder down upon such as go on in their sins, presuming of his mercy, and saying in their hearts, If I may have but a Lord have mercy upon me three hours before death, I care not. But it is just with God when these three hours are come, to shut them up in blindness, and hardness of heart, as a just plague for their presumption. Therefore the Prophet David, seeing the grievousness of this sin, prayeth to be delivered from it: *Keep me O Lord, (saith he) from presumptuous sins, Let them not reign over me, Ps. 19. 13.* Let all men therefore take heed of presumptuous sins: for though God be full of mercy, yet he will shew no mercy to them that presume on his mercy. But they shall once know, to their cost, that justice goeth from him as well as mercy.

Phil. Let us come to the third gate, which is the Example of the Multitude.

Theol. This is proved in the 23d. of Exodus, ver. 2. where the Lord saith flatly, Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil. In another place, the Lord saith, After the doing of the Land of Ægypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do; and after the manner of the Land of Canaan, whether I will bring you, shall ye not do, neither walk in their ordinances, Lev. 18. 3.

Against this Law did the children of Israel offend, when they said in the stubbornness of their heart to the Prophet Jeremy, The word that thou hast spoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hear, but we will do whatsoever goeth out of our mouth, and we will do as we have done, both we and our Fathers, our Kings and our Princes, in the Cities of Judah, and the streets of Jerusalem, Jer. 44. 16.

Note here, how they do altogether scorne the Word of the Lord, and how they follow the example of the multitude. We see in these our days by lamentable experience, how thousands are violently carried down the Stream; and for defence of it, some will say, Do as the most men do, and the fewest will speak ill of you: which is a very wicked speech. For if we will follow the counsels of

the most, we shall have the reward of the most, which is eternal Perdition. Let us therefore take heed of bending with the sway for the sway of the world doth weigh down all things that can be spoken out of the Word of God, and openeth a very wide passage into Hell.

Phil. Proceed to the fourth gate into Hell, which is, the long custome of sin.

Theol. This is noted by the Prophet *Jeremy* to be a dangerous thing; For he saith, *Can the Black-moor change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, which are accustomed to do evil, Jer. 13. 23.* Noting thereby, that it is as hard a matter to leave an old custome of sin, as to wash a Black-moor white, or to change the spots of a Leopard, which because they are natural, is most impossible. So when men through custome have made Swearing, Lying, Adultery, and Drunkenness (as it were) natural to them, oh how hard it is to leave them! For custome maketh another nature, and taketh away all sense and feeling of sin.

Phil. Let us hear of the fifth gate, which is, the long escaping of punishment.

Theol. This is avouched by the wise man, in these words: *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the children of men are set in them*

to do evil, Eccl. 8. 11. Where he sheweth, that one cause why men are so hardned in their sins, is, because God winketh at them, and letteth them alone, not punishing them immediately after they have sinned. For if God should forthwith strike down one, and rain fire and brim-stone upon another, and cause the earth to swallow up a third, then men would fear indeed. But it hath been shewed before, that God taketh not that course, but though he meet with some in this life, yet he lets thousands escape; and that makes them more bold, thinking they shall never come to their answer; even as an old thief, which hath a long time escaped both Prison and Gallows, thinks he shall always so escape, and therefore goeth boldly on in his thefts. But let men take heed: For as the Proverb saith, *Though the Pitcher goeth long to the Well, yet at last it cometh broken home*: So though men escape long, yet they shall not escape always, for there will come a day of reckoning, a day that will pay it home for all. Thus you see how impunity leadeth numbers to destruction: that is, when men are let alone, and neither smitten by the hand of God, nor punished by the Law of the Magistrate.

Phil. *Let us come to the sixth gate, which is the Hope of long life.*

Theoph. This is affirmed by our Saviour concerning that rich man, who when he felt the world come in upon him, with full streams said he would pull down his Barns and build greater, and say to his soul, *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; live at ease, eat, drink, and take thy pastime,* Luke 12. 19. But our Saviour calls him fool, for flattering himself in security, and promising unto himself long life. Moreover, he told him that the same night he should make a helish and miserable end. Note, I pray you, how Jesus Christ, the fountain of all wisdom, calleth this man a fool, and yeldeth a reason thereof; to wit, because he gathered Riches to himself, and was not rich in God: he has great care of this life, and none at all for that which is to come. So then it followeth that all such are right fools indeed, and may be chronicled for fools, (how wise soever they be taken and reputed in the world) which have much care for their bodies, and none for their souls; great care for this life, and little for that which is to come. Well, let all such profane Wordlings as dream and dote of long life, (and therefore defer the day of their Repentance and conversion unto God) take heed by this man's example, that they reckon not with their Host, and be suddenly snatch'd away in the midst of all their pleasures.

asures and jollities, as Job saith, *Some die in their full strength, being in all ease and prosperity. Their breasts run full of milk, and their bones run full of marrow, Job 21. 23, 24.* We see therefore how dangerous a thing it is for men to flatter and sooth up themselves with hope of long life.

Phil. Proceed to the seventh gate, which is, *conceitedness.*

Theol. This is indeed a very broad gate into Hell. For the Scripture saith, *Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of such a one, Pro. 26. 12.* And again, *The fool is wiser in his own eyes, then seven men that can give a sensible reason, Pro. 26. 16.* The Holy Ghost we see affirmeth, that such as are puffed up with an overweening of their own gifts, are farthest of all other from the Kingdom of Heaven. For they despise the wisdom of God to their own destruction. They hold scorn to be taught: they will say they know as much as all the Preachers can tell them. For what can all the Preachers say more then this? We are all sinners, we must be saved by Christ, we must do as he would be done to. There is no more but to do well, and have well, &c. Alas poor souls! they look aloft, they are desperately hoven up with conceitedness, not knowing that they are poor, naked, blind, and miserable, Rev. 3. 17.

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These men trust altogether to their own wit, learning, policy, riches, and great reputation in the world. And because all men crouch to them, and clap their hands at them, therefore they swell like Turkey-Cocks, set up their feathers, and draw their wings upon the ground with a kind of snuff and disdain of all men, as if they were the only wights of the world. Moreover, when men do praise them for their natural gifts, sooth them, and applaud them, then it is a wonder to see how they streak themselves, as though they would forthwith take their flight, and mount unto the clouds. But let all insolent and conceited men hearken unto the woe that is pronounced against them by the Eternal King of Glory, saying, *Wo unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight, Isa. 5. 21.* Again, let them hearken to the counsel of GOD, which saith, *Trust unto the Lord with all thine heart, but lean not unto thine own wisdom. Be not wise in thine own eyes, but fear God, and depart from evil, Prov. 3. 5.* These silly conceited fools think, that because they have the cast of this life, and can cunningly compass the things of this World, and go through-sutch with them, therefore they can compass Heaven also by their fine wits, and deep devices: but alas, poor wretches they are
 great

greatly and grossly deceived. For the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God, and he catcheth the wise in their own craftiness. And again the Lord saith, *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will cast away the understanding of the prudent*, 1 Cor. 3. 19. Let not these men therefore stand too much in their own light, let them not trust to their own policies: for they are all but as an Ice of one nights freezing, which will deceive them that trust unto it. Let them therefore become fools in themselves, that God may make them wise. Let them deny themselves, that God may acknowledge them. Let them be humbled in themselves, that God may exalt them. For assuredly there is no use after this life for the most exquisite wisdom of the flesh, it endeth all when we end. *For how dyeth the wise man. Even as dyeth the fool*, saith the Holy Ghost? Eccles. 2. 16. And where all worldly wisdom endeth, there all heavenly wisdom beginneth. Thus therefore we see what a wide gate into Hell Conceitedness is, and how many enter in thereat.

Phil. *Now let us understand the eighth gate into hell, which is Ill company.*

Theol. The Spirit of God fore-seeing the great danger of this, and knowing how ready we are to be carryed away with ill company, doth give us most earnest warning to take heed

heed of it as a most dangerous thing. *Enter not (saith he) in the way of the wicked, nor walk nor in the way of evil men. Avoid it, nor by it, turn from it, and pass by.* Prov. 14. 15. The reason hereof is yielded in another place, where it is said, *A company of fools shall be made worse,* Prov. 13. 20. Let men therefore take heed of ill company; for many thereby have been brought to the Gallows, and have confessed upon the Ladder, that ill company hath brought them unto it, and therefore have admonished all by their example to take heed and beware of lewd company. Moreover, the Scripture saith; *He that followeth vain companions, shall be filled with poverty,* Prov. 28. 19. And again in the same Chapter, *He that keepeth company with banquetters, shameth his Father.* Let us therefore say with David, *I am a companion of all them that fear God, and keep his Commandments,* Psal. 119. 63. And on the contrary, let us say with him, *I have not haunted with vain persons, neither kept company with the dissemblers. I hate the assembly of the evil, and have not accompanied with the wicked,* Psal. 26. 4, 5. Let us therefore by David's example shun the company of the wicked: for as a man is, so is his company. It is the surest note to discern a man by. For as all unlike things are unfociable, so all like things

things are sociable. Herein let us beware we deceive not our selves with vain words, and an opinion of our strength, as if we were as strong as Christ, and could not be drawn away with any company. No, no, we are more apt to be drawn then to draw; to be drawn to evil by others, then to draw others to good: therefore God saith by his Prophet, *Let them return unto thee, but return not thou unto them*, Jer. 15. 19. Undoubtedly he is an odd man that is not made worse with ill company. For can a man touch pitch and not be defiled therewith? Can a man carry coals in his bosom, and not be burnt? Daily and lamentable experience sheweth, that many of them which think themselves strong, are this way most grievously smitten. Let a man think therefore he never abandoneth evil, till he abandon ill company. For no good is concluded in this Parliament. For ill company is the suburbs of Hell. Furthermore, it is to be observed, that some upon admonitions, and some inward compunctions of their own conscience, do leave their sins until they have new provocations, and until they come among their old copesmates and sinful companions, and then are they carried back again to their old byas, and return to their folly, as a dog returneth to his vomit. For we see some, which otherwise are of good natures and dispositions

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positions, most pitifully and violently carry away with ill company. For even as green wood of it self is unapt to burn, yet being laid on the fire with a great deal of searewood, it burneth as fast as the rest, *Prov. 26. 21.* So many toward youths, which of themselves are not so prone unto evil as others, yet with this violent stream and blustering tempest of ill company are carried away.

Phil. Let us come to the last gate, which is the Evil examples of Ministers.

Theol. It grieveth me, and I am almost ashamed to speak of this point: For is it not a woful, and lamentable thing that any such should be found amongst the Sons of *Levi*? Is it not a curse, that the Ministers of Christ should be of a scandalous conversation? For if the eye be dark, how great is the darkness? If they be examples of all evil to the flock, which should be patterns, lights and examples of all goodness, must it not needs strengthen the hands of the wicked, so as they cannot return from their wickedness? But this is an old disease and evil sickness, which hath always been in the Church. The Prophet *Jeremy* doth most grievously complain of it in his time, and saith, That from the Prophets of *Jerusalem* is wickedness gone forth into all the Land, *Jer. 23. 14.* For both the Prophet and the Priest do wickedly. I have seen (saith

saith he) in the Prophets of Jerusalem, filthi-
ness. They commit adultery, and walk in
laid : they strengthen also the hands of the
icked, that none can return from his wicked-
ness : they are all unto me as Sodom, and the
inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah: And in the
ninth verse of the same Chap. he sheweth that
it was no pleasure or joy unto him so publick-
ly to reprove them, but that he did it with ex-
ceeding grief, as being forced thereunto, both
in regard of God's glory, and the good of
the Church. His words are these : *My heart
breaketh within me, because of the Prophets,
and all my bones shake.* Moreover, in the same
Chapter is set down how the Lord would feed
them with wormwood, and make them drink
the water of gall, and sundry other ways
plague them for their flatteries, seducements,
corrupt Doctrine, and evil examples of
life.

Phil. *Most certain it is, that the evil ex-
amples of Ministers, and especially of Prea-
chers, is very dangerous and offensive ; for
thereby thousands are hardened in their sins.
For men will say, such a Minister, and such a
Preacher doth thus and thus, and therefore
why may not we do so too ? They are learn-
ed, and know the Word of God, therefore if it
were evil, I hope they would not do it : for they
should be lights unto us, and give us good ex-
amples.*

amples. Therefore *sub* they do such things we cannot tell what to think, or what to say the matter: They bring such simple folks we are into a manmerring.

Theol. Oh that I could with the Prophet *Jeremy*, quake and shake to think of the matters! Oh that I could mourn as a Dove penning of it! Oh that I had in the wilderness a cottage, and could with *Job* be a brother to the Dragons, and a companion to the *Ostriges*, whilst I have any thoughts of these things! Oh that I could weep and mourn without sin, before I yield you an answer. For weep indeed, I may, but answer I cannot. Alas (with much grief I speak it) all is too true that you say, and herein the people have a vantage against us, if I may call it a vantage. But let this be my answer: *If the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch*, Mat. 18. 14. Blind guides and blind people shall perish together. If because we are wicked, they will be more wicked, then both they and we shall burn in Hell fire together. Then let them reckon their gains, and see what they have got. They have small cause to triumph over us, for thereby their market is never whit amended. Let them take this for answer. And let us that are the Ministers of Christ, and Preachers of the Gospel, look narrowly to our selves, and make straight

ps to our feet: for if we tread never so lit-
awry, we may see how many eyes are up-
us. Let us therefore with David pray
continually, Order my goings, O Lord, that
my footsteps slip not: for when my foot slipped,
they rejoiced against me. And as for the peo-
ple, let them follow the examples of those
which walk unblameably, (as God be thanked
some such there be) and let them flee the ex-
amples of such as are offensive. So shall God
have more glory, and they more peace in their
own hearts. Thus have we heard what a
wide gate is opened into Hell, by the evil ex-
amples of Ministers, and especially of Prea-
chers.

Phil. Well, sith there be so many bars out of
Heaven, and so many gates into Hell, it is a
very hard matter to break thorow all these
bars, and to enter into life; and as hard a
matter to miss all these gates, and to escape
Hell. He quits him well that can do it.

Theol. True indeed. And as hard a thing
as that is, so hard a thing it is for flesh and
bloud to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.
And yet most men make light of it, and think
it is the easiest matter of an hundred.

Asun. As hard as it is, yet I hope by the
grace of God I shall be one of them that shall
enter in. For so long as I do as I would be
done to, and say no body no harm, nor do no bo-
dy

dy no harm, God will have mercy on my soul. And I doubt not but my good deeds shall weigh against my evil deeds, and that I shall meet even with God at my latter end. For I thank God for it, I have alwaies lived in his feare, and served him with a true intent: Therefore I know that so long as I keep his Commandments, and live as my Neighbors do, and as a Christian man ought to do, he will not dammn my soul.

Theol. Can you then keep God's Commandments?

Asun. As near as God will give me grace.

Theol. Nay, but I ask you whether you keep them or no?

Asun. I do assay to keep them as near as I can: I do my true intent. Though I keep them not all, yet I am sure I keep some of them.

Theol. Because you say you keep some of them. I pray you let me be so bold with you, as to examine you in the particulars. You know the first Commandment is this: Thou shalt have none other Gods in my sight. How say you, do you keep this?

Asun. I am out of all fear of it. For I never worshipped any God but one. I am fully perswaded there is but one God.

Theol.

Theol. What say you then to the second Commandment? Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven Image, &c.

Asun. I never worshipped any Images in my life, I despise them, I know they cannot help me, for they be but stocks and stones.

Theol. What say you to the third Commandment? which is this, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, &c.

Asun. Nay certainly, I was never counted a swearer in my life, but I have served God always of a child, and have had a good faith in him, ever since I could remember, I would be sorry else.

Theol. What say you then to the fourth Commandment? Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day, &c.

Asun. Nay, for that matter I keep my Church as well as any man in the Parish where I dwell, and mind my prayers as well when I am there. I thank God for it, (though I say it myself) I have been alway well given, and have loved Gods Word with all my heart; and it doth me good to hear the Epistles and Gospels read every Sunday by our Vicar.

Theol. Tell me, what say you to the fifth Commandment? which is, Honour thy father and thy mother, &c. Do you keep this?

Asun. I have always loved and obeyed my father

father and mother from my heart. I hope there is nobody can accuse me for that: and I am sure if I keep any Commandment, it is true. For when I was a boy every body said that was well given, and a toward child. Therefore if I should not keep this Commandment it would be a great grief unto me, and go near my heart, as anything that came to me this seven years.

Theol. What say you to the sixth Commandment? Thou shalt not kill.

Afun. It were strange if I should not keep that.

Theol. What say you to the seventh? Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Afun. I thank God for it, I was never given to women, God hath always kept me from that, and I hope will so still.

Theol. What say you to the eighth? Thou shalt not steal.

Afun. I am neither Whore-master, nor Thief.

Theol. What say you to the Ninth? Thou shalt not bear false witness, &c.

Afun. I defie all false witness-bearing from my heart.

Theol. What say you to the last? Thou shalt not covet.

Afun. I thank God for it, I never coveted any mans goods but mine own.

Theol.

Theol. Now I perceive you are a wonderful man; you can keep all the Commandments. You are like the blind Ruler which said unto Christ, *that all these things have I kept from my youth.* Then Mat. 19. 20. I perceive now indeed, that it is no marvel though you make so light of preaching: for you have no need of it: You are whole, you need not the Physician: you feel no misery, and therefore you care not for mercy. For where misery is not felt, there mercy is not regarded: but I see you need no Saviour.

Afun. You say not well in that, I need a Saviour; and it is my Lord Jesus that must save me, for he made me.

Theol. What need you a Saviour, sith you are no sinner?

Afun. Yes, believe me, I am a sinner, we are all sinners: there is no man but he sinneth.

Theol. How can you be a sinner, sith you keep all the Commandments?

Afun. Yes, I am a sinner for all that.

Theol. Can you both be a sinner, and be without sin too? for he that keepeth the Commandments, is without sin, which thing you say you do. But I see how the case standeth, that a great number of such ignorant and sottish men as you are, will in general say you are sinners, because your consciences tell-
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eth you so; but when it cometh to particulars, you know not how you sin, nor where in. I pray you therefore let me lead you thorow the Commandments again, and deal with you in particulars, that I may bring you to the sight of your sins. How say you therefore, Do you upon your knees, every Morning and Evening, give GOD thanks for his particular Mercies, and manifold Favors towards you? and do you call much upon him privately, and much also with your Family? Answer me plainly and simply.

Afun. I cannot say so.

Theol. Then you have broken the first Commandment, which chargeth us to give God his due worship, whereof prayer and thanksgiving are part. So then here at the very entrance, you are found guilty. Further, I demand of you whether you never had any by-thoughts in your prayers, and your heart hath not been upon other matters, even then while you were in prayers?

Afun. I cannot deny that: For it is a very hard matter to pray without by-thoughts.

Theol. Then (by your own confession) you have broken the second Commandment, which doth command the right manner of God's worship: that is, that as we must worship God, so we must do it in faith, love, zeal, and pure affections. So that here you are guilty

guilty also; because when you pray, your mind is of other matters; and you do it not in sincerity and truth. Further I demand of you whether you did never swear by your faith and troth, or by our Lady St. *Mary*, and such other oaths?

Asun. *Yes, by St. Mary have I: I must needs confess it.*

Theol. We need no further witness, your very answer proveth it; for your answer is an oath: therefore, here also are you guilty, because you swear by Idols. For, I demand of you, whether you did never travel to Fairs on the Sabbath day, or make bargains on that day, or take journeys, or talk of worldly matters, neglecting holy duties.

Asun. *Yes, God forgive me, I have.*

Theol. Then are you guilty of the breach of the fourth Commandment, which chargeth us on pain of death to spend the Sabbath day, in holy and religious duties, both publickly and privately. Further, I demand, whether you instruct your wife, children, and servants in the true knowledge of God, and pray with them or no?

Asun. *I am sure you would have me speak the truth. I must need confess, I do not, neither am I able to do it.*

Theol. Then are you guilty of the breach of the fifth Commandment, which command-

eth all duties of superiours, towards their inferiours, and of inferiours toward their superiours, whereof prayers and instructions are a part. Moreover, I demand whether you were ever angry or no?

Asun. Yes, an hundred times in my days, and I think there is no body but will be angry at one time or other, especially when they have cause.

Theol. Then you have broken the sixth Commandment, which chargeth us to avoid wrath, anger, malice, desire of revenge, and all such like fore-runners unto murder. Furthermore, I ask you, whether you did never look upon a woman with a lust in your heart.

Asun. Yes, for I think there is no man free from thoughts that way, I had thought thoughts had been free.

Theol. No: thoughts are not free before God; for God knoweth our thoughts, and will punish us, arraign us, and condemn us for thoughts. Men know not thoughts, and therefore can make no Laws against thoughts; but because God is privy to all our most secret thoughts, therefore he hath made Laws against them, and will condemn them. Therefore I conclude, that if you have nourished adulterous thoughts in your heart, you are guilty of the breach of the seventh Commandment.

Commandment, which forbiddeth all secret thoughts and provocations whatsoever to adultery. But further, I demand whether you did never pilfer, purloin, and steal some small things from your neighbour : as pasture poultry, conies, apples, and such like ?

Afun. I cannot clear my self in these things : for I had thought they had been no sin.

Theol. Then have you broken the eighth Commandment, and stand guilty of eternal death. For God in this Commandment chargeth us to have as great a care of our neighbours goods, as of our own; and not to injure him any manner of way, in thought, word, or deed. Therefore all deceit, pilfering, oppressing, and all unjust dealing with our neighbours goods, is here condemned. Moreover, let me ask you, whether you did never lie or dissemble ?

Afun. Yes, Affuredly.

Theol. Then have you broken the ninth Commandment : wherein God chargeth us, both in witness-bearing, and all other matters, to speak the plain truth from our heart, without lying or dissembling. Last of all, I demand, whether you did never in your heart desire something that was not your own : as your neighbours house, or ground, kine, or sheep, &c. therein bewraying the discontentment of your heart.

Asun. I am as guilty in this as any in thing. For, God forgive me, I have often desired and lusted after this and that which was none of mine own, and so have bewrayed my discontentment.

Theol. Then I perceive (by your own confession) that you are guilty of the breach of all the Commandments.

Asun. I must needs confess it: for I see now more into that matter then ever I did. I never heard so much before in my life, nor have ever asked any such questions as you ask me. I had thought many of those things which you asked me, had been no sins at all.

Theol. I could have convicted you in a thousand other particulars, wherein you daily and hourly break the Law of God. But my purpose was only to give you a taste of some particular transgressions, and therewithall some little light by the way into the meaning of the Law: that thereby you might be brought to some better sight of your self, and might a little perceive in what case you stand before God; and by that little, conceive a great deal more.

Asun. Well; now I do plainly see, that I have been deceived, and am not in so good estate before God; as I thought I had been. Moreover, I see that thousands are out of the way, which think they are in a good case before

fore God: whereas indeed they are in blindness, and in their sins. But Lord have mercy upon us! I do now plainly see, that I am far from keeping the Commandments; and I think no man doth keep them.

Theol. You may swear it, I warrant you. For neither St. Paul, David, or the Virgin Mary could ever keep any one of the Commandments. I am glad you begin to see into the Law of God, and to have some taste that way. For as a mans knowledge & in-sight is into the Law, so is his knowledge and into in-sight himself. He that hath a deep in-sight into the Law of God, hath also a deep in-sight into himself. He that hath no in-sight into the Law, can have no in-sight into himself. For the Law is that glass, wherein we do behold the face of our souls before God. The Apostle saith, *By the Law cometh the knowledge of sin.* Therefore those who are altogether ignorant of the Law, and never behold themselves in this glass, do commit a hundred sins a day, which they know not of; and therefore are not grieved for them. For how can a man be grieved for that which he knoweth not? But now further, I pray you to give me leave to ask you some more questions of the principles of Religion, to the end, that you, knowing and feeling your ignorance, may be humbled therewith, bewail it in time, and seek after the true knowledge of God. But

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yet, by the way, I will ask *Antilegon* a question or two; because I desire to understand what knowledge he hath in the grounds of Religion. Tell me therefore *Antilegon*, what was the reason why Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost.

Antil. I could answer you, but I will not. What authority have you to examine me? Shew your Commission. When I see your warrant, I will answer you: in the mean time, you have nothing to do to examine me. Meddle with that you have to do withal.

Theol. I perceive you are not only ignorant, but wilful, and obstinate, and refuse all instructions. Therefore I will leave you to God, and to your galled conscience. But I pray you, *Asunetus*, answer this question. What think you, what was the reason that Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost.

Asun. Believe me, Sir, that is an hard question; you may ask a wise man that question: for I cannot answer it.

Theol. What say you then to this, who was Christ's mother?

Asun. Mary, Sir, that was our blessed Lady.

Theol. What was Pontius Pilate?

Asun. I am somewhat ignorant, I am not book learned: but if you will have my simple opinion, I think it was the Devil. For

none

none but the Devil would put our sweet Sa-
viour to death.

Theol. What is the Holy Catholick
Church which you do believe?

Afun. The Communion of Saints, the for-
giveness of sins.

Theol. What do you pray for, when you
say, Thy Kingdom come.

Afun. I do pray that God would send us all
of us his grace, that we may serve him and do
as we ought to do, and keep us in a good mind
to God-ward, and to have him much in our
mind. For some (God bless us) have nothing
but the Devil in their mind; they do nothing
a Gods Name.

Theol. What is the Sacrament?

Afun. The Lords Supper.

Theol. How many Sacraments be there?

Afun. Two.

Theol. Which be they?

Afun. Bread and Wine.

Theol. What is the principal end of your
coming to receive the Sacrament?

Afun. To receive my Maker.

Theol. What is the principal use of a Sa-
crament?

Afun. The Body and Bloud of Christ.

Theol. What profit and comfort have you
by a Sacrament.

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Asun. *In token that Christ dyed for us.*

Theol. I can but pity you for your ignorance: for it is exceeding gross and palpable. Your answers are to no purpose, and bewray a wonderful blindness and senselessness in matters of Religion. I am sorry that now, I have not time and leisure to let you see your folly and extream ignorance; as also to lay open unto you the sense and meaning of the Articles of the Faith, the Lord's Prayer, and the Sacraments, and all other the grounds of Christian Religion.

Asun. *What course would you wish me to take, that I may come out of ignorance, and attain unto the true knowledge of God?*

Theol. Surely I would wish you to be diligent in hearing of Sermons, and reading the Scriptures, with Prayer and Humility. Also that you would peruse Catechisms, and other good books, and especially *Virels* grounds of Religion, and the works of the two worthy servants of God, Master *Giffard*, and Master *Perkins*, and other mens, that have done great service to the Church, and for whom thousands are bound to give God thanks. If you take this course, you shall by God's grace within a short time, grow to some good measure of knowledge in all the main grounds of Christian Religion.

Phil.

Phil. *I had not thought any man had been so ignorant, as now I perceive this man is.*

Theol. Yes verily, there be thousands in his case. And I do know by experience, that many will use the very same answers, or at least, very little differing.

Phil. *I warrant you, if you had questioned with him of kine or sheep, purchasing of Land, taking of Leases, or any other matters under the Sun, you should have found him very ripe and ready in his answers.*

Theol. I am so persuaded too. For let a man talk with worldly men of worldly matters, and their answer is never to seek. They will talk very freshly with you of such matters, if it be all the day long. For they have a deep in-sight into earthly things, and do wholly delight to talk of them, being never weary. For it is their joy, their meat and their drink. But come once to talk with them of God's matters, as of Faith, Repentance, Regeneration, &c. you shall find them the veriest dullards and dunces in the world. For when speech is had of these things, they are so befogged, that they cannot tell where they are, nor what they say.

Phil. *In my judgment, such mens case is verypittiful and dangerous: and so is this man's case also, if God do not verry speedily pull him out out.*

Theol. Questionless : For God saith, *My people perish for want of knowledge, Hos. 4. 6.* Our Lord Jesus saith, that ignorance is the cause of all errors. *Ye erre,* saith he, *not knowing the Scriptures, Mat. 22. 29.* The Apostle saith, that ignorance doth alienate us from the life of God : For saith he, *the Gentiles were darkned in their cogitation, being strangers from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, Eph. 4. 18.* So then it is clear that ignorance is not the mother of Devotion, as the Papists do avouch, but it is the mother of Error, Death and Destruction, as the Scripture affirmeth. Our Lord foreseeing the great danger of ignorance, (how thereby thousands are carryed headlong into Hell) doth admonish all men to search the Scriptures, which do testifie of him, that so they might get out of the most dangerous gulf of ignorance, wherein multitudes are implunged. Therefore the noble men of *Berea* are commended by the Holy Ghost, because they received the Word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so, *Act. 17. 11.* Oh therefore that men would earnestly seek after the knowledge of God in time, and (as the Prophet saith) *seek the Lord whilst he may be found, call upon him whilst he is near, Esay. 55. 6.*

Phil. I do see that all ignorance in matters of faith, is dangerous; but I think wilful ignorance is of all other most dangerous.

Theol. Wilful ignorance (no doubt) is a plain prognostication and demonstrative argument of eternal death; for it is a most horrible and fearful thing for men to refuse instruction, despise counsel, harden their hearts, stop their ears, and close up their eyes against God. This is the very upshot of our decay.

Phil. I pray you what call you hardness of heart?

Theol. An hard heart is that which is neither moved with God's mercies, nor scared with his judgments; neither feareth the Law, nor regardeth the Gospel; neither is holpen by threatnings, nor softened by chastenings; which is unthankful for God's benefits, and disobedient to his counsels; made cruel by his rods, and dissolute by his favours; unshamefac'd to filthiness, and fearless to perils; uncourteous to men, and wretchless to God; forgetful of things past, negligent in things present, and improvident in things to come.

Phil. Lay forth yet more plainly the state of ignorant and hardhearted men, and shew how lamentable it is.

Theol.

Theol. If a man be outwardly blind, we do pity him, and say, There goes a poor blind man but if he be both blind and deaf, do we not more pity him, and say, Oh in how miserable a case is that man ! but if he be both blind, deaf and dumb, do we not most of all pity him, and say, Oh, that man is in a most woe-ful taking, and in a most pittiful plight !

How much more then are they to be pittied, which as concerning their souls, are both blind, deaf, and dumb, for the diseases of the soul are far more dangerous, and more to be pittied, then those of the body ?

Would it not pity a man's heart to see a poor Sheep in a Lyons mouth, whilst he teareth him, rendeth him, and pulls out his guts ? Even such is the case of ignorant men in the claws of the Devil. For the Devil hath them under him, rideth them at his pleasure, and reareth their souls in pieces.

Oh that we had eyes to see these things, hearts to feel them, and affections to be thoroughly moved with them, even unto mourning and tears !

Phil. Few do think that ignorant men are in so woful a case as you speak of ; for they think ignorance will excuse them. And some will say, they are glad they have so little knowledge. For if they should have much knowledge of their Masters will, and do it not, they should

be beaten with many stripes; but now, being ignorant, they think all is safe.

Theol. God willeth his people to offer sacrifice for their sins of ignorance, therefore ignorance is a sin, and excuseth no man. And as for the state of their souls before God, it is most miserable, if we could see into their souls as we see their bodies. For assuredly there be multitudes which ruffle it out in Velvets and Silks, and most brave and glittering outfides, but inwardly are full of filthiness and sin: they have fine delicate bodies, but most ugly, black and filthy souls: if a man could see into their souls, as he doth into their bodies, he would stop his nose at the stink of them. For they smell rank of sin in the Nostrils of God, his Angels, and all good men.

Phil. Then I perceive by your speech, that the case of all ignorant and profane men, is fearfull in the sight of G O D, and that all good men are to pittie them, and to pray for them.

Theol. If two blind and deaf men should walk in a beaten path that leads to a great deep pond, wherein they are like to be drowned, if they go forwards, and two men far off should whoop unto them, and will them not to forward lest they be drowned; yet they neither seeing any man, nor hearing a-ny

ny man, go forward, and are drowned: were not this a lamentable spectacle to behold? Even so is it with all the ignorant, blind and deaf souls of the world, for they see no perils, but walk on boldly to destruction. And though the Preachers of the Gospel whoop never so loud unto them, or give them never so many warnings and caveats to take heed; yet they, being inwardly blind, see nothing; and spiritually deaf, hear nothing; and therefore go on forward in their sins and ignorance, till they suddenly fall into hell pit.

Put case also two great Armies should pitch a field, and fight a main battle upon a plain, and that some man should stand upon the top of a Mountain hard by, and behold all, and should see with his own eyes how thousands, and ten thousands went to wrack, and fell down on every side, as thick as hail, the whole plain swimming in blood: and should also hear the groaning of Souldiers wounded, and the doleful sighs and groanings of many Captains and Collonels giving up the ghost: were not this a most woful spectacle? Even so, when we do clearly see Satan wound and murder thousand thousand souls, is it not a far more tragical and lamentable sight; and ought it not even to kill our hearts to behold it? But (alass) men have no eyes to see into these things. And yet certain it is, that Sa-
ran

tan doth continually, and in most fearful manner, massacre innumerable souls. Thus have I shewed you the woful estate of profane and ignorant men.

Phil. If it be so, you that be Ministers and Preachers of the Gospel, and have taken upon you the cure and charge of souls, have need to look about you, and do what in you lieth to save souls; and, as good Shepheards, in great pittie and compassion, to labour to pull them out of the paws of the roaring Lyon, which goes about continually, seeking whom he may devour.

Theol. It standeth us upon indeed very seriously and carefully to look to it, as we will answer it at the dreadful day of Judgement. For it is no small matter that we have taken in hand, which is, to care for the flock which Christ hath bought with his blood. Would to God therefore, that we would leave striving about other matters, and strive together all about this, who can pull most out of the kingdom of Satan, sin and ignorance; who can win most souls, and who can perform best service to the Church. This were a good strife indeed; and would to God that we might once at last with joyned forces go about it, and with one heart and hand joyn together to build up God's house. If through our own follies the work hath been hindred, or any breach

breach made, let us in wisdom and love, labor to make it up again: if there have been any declining and coldness, let us now at last revive, let us stir up our selves, that we may stir up others: let us be zealous and fervent in Spirit, that we may through God's grace put life into others, and rouse up this dead, declining and cold age wherein we live. So shall God be glorified, his Church edified, his Saints comforted, his people saved, his throne erected, and the kingdom of the Devil overthrown.

Phil. What think you were the best course to effect this which you speak of?

Theol. This is a thing that must be exceedingly labored in, of us which are the Ministers and Preachers of the Gospel. And here is required diligence, and (as we say) double diligence, for the people are everywhere very ignorant. Some are stones, altogether incapable of instructions; others are froward and wilful; some will receive the Doctrine, but not the practise; some again are altogether set upon peevishness and cavilling. So that a man had better take upon him the charge of keeping Wolves and Bears, then the charge of Souls. For it is the hardest thing in the world, to reform mens disorders and to bring them into order; to pull mens souls out of the kingdom of Satan, and to bring them to God.

God. It is as we say, an endless piece of work, and infinite toyl, a labor of all labors: I quake to think of it. For men are so obstinate and irrefragable, that they will be brought into no order, they will come under no yoke. They will not be ruled by God, nor bridled by his Word. They will follow their own swinge. They will run after their own lusts and pleasures. They will rage and storm if you go about to curb them, and restrain them of their wills, likings and liberties. They will have their wills, likings and liberties. They will have their wills, and follow their old fashions, say what you will, and do what you can.

Is it not, think you, a busie piece of work to smooth and square such Timber-logs, so full of knots and knobs? Is it not a tedious and irksome thing to think upon? And would it not kill a mans heart to go about it? For how hard a thing is it to bring such into frame, as are so far out of frame.

Phil. Well, Sir, you can but do your endeavour, and commit the success to God. You can but plant and water: let God give the increase; For are Ministers of the Letter; but not of the Spirit. You baptize with water; but not with the Holy Ghost. If you therefore preach diligently, exhort admonish, and reprove publickly and privately, studying by

by all good example of life, and seeking with good zeal, care and conscience, to do the utmost that in you lyeth, to reduce them from their evil ways: I take it, you are discharged, though they remain stubborn and incorrigible. For you know what the Lord saith by his Prophet, Ezek. 33. 9. If you do admonish them, and give them warning, then you shall be discharged, and their blood shall be required of their own hands.

Theol. You have spoken the truth, and therefore, sith some must needs take upon them this so great a charge, it will be our best course, to labour much with them in Catechizing, and private Instructions, and that in most familiar and plain manner. For much good hath been done, and is done this way. The ignorant sort must be much laboured upon this way: and so no doubt, much good may be done. For in all labour there is profit, Prov. 14. 23. Herein we (that are the Ministers of Christ) must be content to be abased, and to teach the poor ignorant people in most plain manner; asking them many easy questions, and often questioning with them in most plain and loving manner; till we have brought them to some taste and smack of the Principles of Christian Religion. We must not be ashamed to use repetitions and tautologies, and to tell them one thing twenty times over.

over, and over again, here a line and there a line, here a little and there a little, precept upon precept, as the Prophet speaks, *Isa. 28. 10.* I know right-well nothing goes more against the stomach of a Scholar, and him that is learned indeed, then to do thus. It is as irksome and tedious as to teach *A, B, C.* Some can at no hand endure it. But truly, truly, I find now, after a long experience, that if we will do any good to these simple & ignorant souls, we must enter into this course; and we may not be ashamed of it. For it will be our crown and our glory to win souls, howsoever we be abased. Let us therefore be well content to stoop down, that Christ may be exalted: let us be abased, that God may be honoured; let us do all things in great love to Christ, who hath said, *If thou lovest me feed, feed feed my flock.* *Joh. 21. 25.* Let us therefore testify our love to him, by feeding his flock. Let us do all things in great love, and deep compassion towards the poor souls that go astray: as it is said, that our Lord Jesus was moved to pity, and his bowels did yern to see the people as sheep without a shepherd: let it likewise move us thoroughly, and make our hearts to bleed, to see so many poor sheep of Christ, wandring and straying in the Mountains and Wilderness of this world, caught in every bramble, and hanged in every bush, ready to be devoured of the Wolf.

Wolf. Thus have I shewed you, what counsell (in my judgment) is best to be taken for the delivering of poor ignorant souls out of the captivity of Satan and sin.

Phil. *Now as you have declared what course is best to be followed on your part which are Ministers and Preachers of the Gospel: so I pray you shew what is best to be done of us which are the people of God.*

Theol. The best counsel that I can give you, if it were for my life, is to be much exercised in the Word of God, both in hearing, reading, and meditation thereof, and also to purchase unto your self, the sincere Ministry of the Gospel, and to make conscience to live under it; esteeming your self happy if you have it, though you want other things; and unhappy if you have it not, though you have all other things. For it is a pearlesse pearl, an incomparable jewel. For the purchasing whereof, we are advised by our Lord Jesus to sell all that we have, rather then to go without it, *Mat. 13. 44.* Again our Saviour Christ gives the same counsel to the Church of *Laodicea*, in these words: *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tryed by the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed; and that thy filthy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thy eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see, Apoc. 3. 18.* Where you see the

Word

Word of God is compared to most precious gold, whereby we are made spiritually rich; and to glittering attyre, wherewith our naked souls are cloathed; and to an eye-salve, wherewith our spiritual blindness is cured, we are advertised also by Jesus Christ, whose counsel is ever the best, to buy these things whatsoever they cost us. The same counsel also giveth wise *Salomon*, saying, *Buy the Truth, but sell it not, Prov. 23. 23.* So then you see the counsel which herein I give you, is not of mine own, but the counsel of Jesus himself, and *Solomon* the wise: and who can, or who dare except against their counsel?

Afun. Is your meaning that men must of necessity frequent preaching of the Word? will not bear reading serve the turn?

Theol. I told you before, that reading is good, profitable and necessary, but yet it is not sufficient. We must not content our selves with that only, but we must go further, and get unto our selves the sound preaching of the Gospel, as the cheifest and most principal means which God hath ordained and sanctified for the saving of men. As Saint *Paul* saith, *When as the world (by wisdom) knew not God, in the wisdom of God it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe, 1 Cor. 1. 21.* The meaning of it is, that when as men, neither by natural wisdom, nor the

the contemplation of the creatures, could sufficiently attain to the true knowledge of God the Lord according to his heavenly and infinite wisdom, thought of another course, which is to save men by preaching, which the world counteth foolishness. And by the way, note that the preaching of the Word is not a thing of humane invention, but is of God's own device, and came first from him, and is the next and nearest way to save mens souls.

Wise *Salomon* also in the Book of the *Proverbs*, telleth us, that the preaching of God's Word (which he calleth *Vision*, using the word of the *Prophets*, which called their *Sermons* *Visions*) is not a thing that may be spared, or that we may be at our choice, whether we have it or no: but he maketh it to be of absolute necessity unto eternal life. For he saith, *Where Vision faileth, the people are left naked*, *Pro. 29. 18*. So indeed it is in the Original: but the old Translation giveth us the sence thus: *Where the Word of God is not preached, there the people perish*. Thus you see that *Salomon* strikes it dead, telling us that all they which are without preaching of the Word, are in exceeding great danger of losing their souls. O that men could be persuaded of this! *St. Paul* also saith, *That faith cometh by hearing the Word preached*, *Rom. 10. 14*. for he saith, *How can they hear with-*

us a Preacher? If faith cometh by hearing the Word preached, then I reason thus: No preaching, no faith: no faith, no Christ: no Christ, no eternal life; for eternal life is only in him. Let us then put them together thus: Take away the word, take away faith, take away faith, take away Christ: take away Christ, and take away eternal life. So then it follows: Take away the Word, and take away eternal life. Or we may read them backward, thus: if we will have Heaven, we must have Christ: if we will have Christ, we must have Faith: if we will have Faith, we must have the Word preached. Then it followeth thus: If we will have Heaven, we must have the Word preached. Then I conclude, that preaching generally, and for the most part, is of absolute necessity unto eternal life, as meat is of absolute necessity for the preservation of our bodies, as grafs and fodder are of absolute necessity for the upholding of the life of beasts, as water of absolute necessity for the life of fishes. Then this being so, men are with great care and conscience to hear the Gospel preached, to frequent Sermons, to resort much to God's house and habitation, where his honor dwelleth; with David to say, *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I require, even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord*

Lord, and to visit his holy Temple, Where
 godly Mary to say, One thing is neces-
 sary, Luke 10. 42. and to chuse the bet-
 ter part. With the poor Cripple at Betheld
 Joh. 5. 7. to wait for the moving of the wa-
 ters by the Angel, that his impotency may
 be cured: I mean, that we should tye our-
 selves to the first moving of the spiritual wa-
 ters of life, by the Preachers of the Gospel,
 that our spiritual impotency may be holpen
 and relieved. For the Ministry of the Gos-
 pel is that golden Pipe whereby, and where-
 through all the goodness of God, all the
 sweetness of Christ, and all Heavenly graces
 whatsoever, are derived unto us. Which
 thing was shaddowed in the Law, by the Pome-
 granates in the skirts of Aaron's garments, and
 the golden Bells between them round about,
 that is, a golden Bell and a Pomegranate, Exo. 28. 33.
 The golden Bells did signifie the preaching of
 the Gospel, and the Pomegranates the sweet
 favor of Christ's death. Noting thereby,
 that the sweet favor of Christ's death, and all
 the benefits of his passion, should be spread
 abroad by the preaching of the Gospel. Thus
 you see, that if men ever purposed to be sa-
 ved, they must make more account of the
 Preaching of the Gospel then they have done,
 and not think (as most men do) that they may
 be

Without it, and yet do well enough: and some had as leevē be without it, as have it; for it doth both disquiet them, and trouble their consciences: But woe unto such.

Phil. Yet we see where the Word is soundly preached, there be many bad people: and the reasons thereof, in mine opinion, are two: The one, that God taketh his Holy Spirit from many in hearing the Word, so that their hearing is made unfruitful: the other, that the Devil hath an hundred devices to hinder the effectual working of the Word, so as it shall do no good at all, nor take any effect in multitudes of men. But you, Master Theologus, can better lay open this matter then I, I pray you therefore speak something of it.

Theol. The sleights of Satan in this behalf, are more, and more sly, then I, or any man else can possibly discover. For who is able to descry, or in sufficient manner to lay open the deep subtilties and most secret and sinful suggestions of the Devil in the hearts of men? He is so cunning a crafts-master this way, that none can perfectly trace him. His workings in the hearts of men are with such close and hidden deceits, and most methodical and crafty conveyances, that none can sufficiently find them out. But yet notwithstanding, I will bewray unto you so much as I know, or can conceive of his dealings with them that

hear the Word, that he may steal it out of
 their hearts, and make it fruitless and unpro-
 fitable. First of all he bestirreth him, and la-
 bours hard to keep all men fast asleep in their
 sins, that they may have no care at all of their
 own salvation, and therefore dissuadeth them
 from hearing or reading the Word at all, lest
 they should be awaked. If this will not pre-
 vail, but that they must needs hear then, his
 craft is to make their hearing unprofitable, by
 sleepiness, dullness, by thoughts, conceited-
 ness, and a thousand such like. If this will not
 serve turn, but that the Word doth get within
 them, and work upon them, (so as thereby
 they grow to some knowledge & understand-
 ing of the truth) then he practiseth another
 way, which is, to make them rest themselves
 upon their bare knowledge, and so become
 altogether conscienceless. If this will not
 suffice, but that men fall to doing, and leave
 some sins, especially the gross sins of the
 world, and do some good, then he perswadeth
 them to trust to those doings without Christ,
 and to think themselves well enough, because
 they do some good, and leave some evil. If
 this be not enough, but that men attain unto
 the true justifying faith, which apprehend-
 eth Christ, and resteth upon his merits, then
 he deviseth how to blemish the beauty of
 their faith, and weaken their comfort through
 many

many frailties and wants; yea, gross down-falls and rank evils; so as they shall be but spotted and leprous Christians. If this weapon will not work, but that Christians do joyn all good vertues with their faith, and abundantly shine forth in all the fruits of righteousness, then he casteth about another way, which is, to daunt and damp them with discouragements; as poverty, necessity, sickness, reproaches, contempt, persecutions, &c. If none of all these will do the deed, but that men constantly believe Christ, and patiently and joyfully endure all afflictions, then his last refuge is, to blow them up with Gunpowder, that is, to puff them up with a pride of their gifts, graces, & strength, and so to give them an utter overthrow whilst they do not walk humbly, & give God the praise of his gifts.

Thus have you a little taste of Satans cunning, in making the Word unfruitful amongst us.

Asun. I pray, good Sir, (seeing I am ignorant & unlearned) give me some particular directions out of the Word of God, for the good guiding and ordering of my particular actions, in such sort as that I may glorifie God in the earth, and after this life be glorified of him for ever.

Theol. It were an infinite thing to enter into all particulars; but briefly do this: First, seek God earnestly in his Word, pray much, in all things give thanks, eschew evil, and do

good; fear God, and keep his Commandments; reform your self and your household; love vertue, and vertuous men; keep company with the godly, and avoid the society of the wicked. Live soberly, justly, and holily in this present evil world. Speak alwaies graciously; and beware of filthy communication. Recompence no man evil for evil, but recompence evil with good. Be courteous and pitiful towards all men. Take heed of swearing, cursing, and banning. Beware of anger, wrath, and bitterness. Praise your friend openly, reprove him secretly. Speak no evil of them that are absent, nor of the dead. Speak evil of no man, speak always the best, or at least not the worst. Reverence God's Name, and keep his Sabbaths. Avoid all the signs of condemnation, and labour after all the signs of salvation. Above all things take heed of sin, for that is the very cut-throat of the soul, and of all goodness. Tremble therefore and sin not; for if you sin, mark what followeth:

God seeth: His Angels bear witness: The conscience pricketh. *Six great dangers in sin.* Death threatneth: The Devil accuseth: Hell devoureth.

You see then that sin is no scar-crow or trifling matter. Every sin that a man committeth, is as a thorn thrust deep into the soul, which

which will not be got out again, but with many a sigh, and many a sorrowful Oh, oh, Every sin is written with a pen of Iron, *Jer. 17. 1.* and the point of a Diamond upon the conscience, and shall in the last day (when the Book shall be opened) accuse us, and give in evidence against us. If a man commit sin with pleasure, the pleasure passeth away, but the conscience and sting of the sin abideth, and tormenteth deadly; but if a man do well, though with labour and painfulness, the pain passeth away, yet the conscience of well-doing remaineth with much comfort. But the best end of sin is always repentance; if not in this life, then with wo, and alas when it is too late. Therefore take heed in time, take heed. I say of sin: for

Sin hardens the heart, *Heb. 3. 13.*

Sin gnaws the conscience, *1 Sam. 25.*

Sin fights against the soul, *1 Pet. 1. 11.*

Sin brings forth death, *Jam. 1. 15.*

Sin makes ashamed, *Rom. 6. 21.*

Sin procures plagues of body and soul, *Deut. 28.*

Behold therefore the evil effects of sin. For this cause Zophar the Naamathite speaketh very wisely to Job, saying, When thou shalt

lift thy face out of thy sin, thou shalt be strong
 and shalt not fear: thou shalt forget all sor-
 row, thou shalt remember it as the waters that
 are past. Where Zophar plainly sheweth,
 that the avoiding of sin is our strength, and the
 committing of it, our weakening: according
 to that of Salomon, *The way of the Lord is the*
strength of the upright man, Pro. 10. 29. There-
 fore walk in the way of GOD, and take heed of
 the ways of sin; for GOD punisheth every
 sin his way, some one way, and some ano-
 ther; and no sin can escape unpunished. For
 because God is just, therefore he must needs
 punish sin in all men, though in divers man-
 ners; as the wicked in their own persons, the
 godly in Christ. Beware of it
 therefore, and flatter not your self
 in your sins. Remember how eve-
 ry disobedience, and every trans-
 gression hath had a just recompence
 of reward. God hath in all ages
 matched the cause with the effect;
 that is sin, with the punishment of sin. The Is-
 raelites, for breaking the first Command-
 ment, in making other Gods, were often smit-
 ten by the hand of God, *Exod. 32. 30. Nadab*
and Abihu, the sons of *Haron*, for the breach of
 the Second Commandment, *Lev. 10. 2.* in of-
 fering strange fire upon God's Altar, were
 consumed with fire, *Levit. 24. 14.* He that
 bla-

Note how
 God in all
 ages hath
 punished
 the break-
 ers of his
 law.

blasphemed and transgressed the Third Commandment, was stoned to death, *Numb.* 15. 32. He that brake the fourth Commandment in gathering sticks on the Sabbath, was likewise stoned, *2 Sam.* 18. 9. *Absolom* transgressing the fifth, was hanged in his own hair, *Gen.* 34. 26. *Cain* transgressing the sixth, in slaying his brother *Abel*, was branded with the mark of God's wrath. *Sichem* the son of *Humar*, transgressing the seventh, in defiling *Dinah* the Daughter of *Jacob*, was slain by *Siméon* and *Levi* the Sons of *Jacob*, *Jos.* 7. 25. *Achan* sinning against the eighth Commandment in stealing the wedge of Gold, and the Babylonish garment, was stoned to death, *Acts* 5. 10. *Ananias* and *Saphira* sinning against the ninth, in lying and dissembling, were suddenly smitten with death, *1 Kings* 21. 24. *Abub* transgressing the tenth Commandment, in coveting and discontentment, was devoured of Dogs. Or if you will have original sin therein only forbidden, then Infants are therefore punished with death, *Rom.* 5. 14.

Thus we see there is no dallying with GOD; but if we sin, we are as sure to be jerked for it, as the coat is on our back. Therefore let us not deceive our selves, nor make light of sin, for sin is no scar-bug; and we shall one day find it so. And howsoever we make light of some sins, yet in very deed all

sin is odious in the sight of G O D; yea, sin is hainous and capital in this respect, that it is against a person of infinite being, it is against G O D himself, it is against the highest Majesty. For the greatness of the person offended, doth inhaunce and increase the greatness of the sin.

As for example: If a man rail at a Justice of peace, he shall be stocked; if he rail at one of his Majesties privy Counsel, he shall be imprisoned: but if he rail at his own Majesty, he shall be hanged. So then you see how a sin is encreased by the dignity of the person offended. Now then, such all mortal Princes are but dust in the sight of God, (and he is a person of infinite and incomparable Majesty) how hainous and how flagitious a thing is it, in anywise, or after any sort to sin against his most royal and sacred person? Well to grow to some conclusion, this I do advise you; as to shun vice, so to embrace all vertue; as to put off the old man, so to put on the new man. Remember often and always, what shall become of you after this life? whether you shall be forty years hence in Hell or Heaven. Look well to that in time; and therefore so live, that you may live always. Consider often in your serious cogitations.

What

What you have been : what you are : what
you shall be : what God hath
done for you : what he doth : *Nine profitable*
what he will do : God's judg- *Considerations.*
ments past : God's judgments present : God's
judgments to come.

Awake at last, and take care for your sal-
vation. Sleep no longer in sin, lest ye perish
eternally. *For verily there is a reward for*
the righteous : doubtless there is a God that
judges the earth, Psa. 58. 11. And this is
the best counsel I can give you.

Asun. Your counsel is very good. I pray God
give me grace to follow it, and so to live, that I
may please God, and go to Heaven in the end.

Theol. You must take heed you speak not
these words of course, and for fashion sake,
having no settled purpose in your heart to fol-
low these directions. For there be numbers
that can skill to give good words, but they
will do nothing. They think they highly
please God with their good words, and that
God will take them for payment, as though
God regarded words. They would fain go
to Heaven, but they will take no pains, they
will leave no sins, they will not forego their
lusts and pleasures. They would have the re-
ward of God's Children, but
they will not do the works of
God's Children. They would

This is most
mis. case.

have the sweet, but they will none of the sour. They would have the crown, but they will fight never a stroke. They would come to *Canaan*, but they are loth to travel that long and dangerous way which leadeth unto it. Therefore those men being the Sons of idleness, will step short (in the end) of that they look for. For the Spirit saith, *They sluggard lusts, but his soul hath nought, Prov. 13. 4.* We must therefore leave bare words, and come to deeds. For our Lord Jesus saith, *Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven: but he that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven: Mat. 7. 21.* Where we see Christ (in plain terms) excludes out of his Kingdom, all those whose Religion consisteth only in good words, and smooth speeches; but make no conscience to practise the Commandments of God.

David, having made some good preparation for the building of the Temple, and perceiving his son *Salomon* to have stuff and provision enough to perfect and finish it, doth most wisely encourage him to the work in these words: *Up and be doing, and the Lord shall be with thee, 1 Chro. 29. 20.* Oh that men would follow this counsel of *David*, that they would up and be doing, and not sit still and do nothing; that they would leave words and countenances, and set upon the practise

of God's Law, and study with all care and conscience to be obedient to his will. Then assuredly, God would be with them, and bless them, and much good would come of it. For the Scripture saith, *In all labour there is profit or increase: but the talk of the lips onely bringeth want*, Pro. 14. 23.

Phil. Most mens minds are so wholly drowned in the love of this world, that they have no heart to obey God, nor any delight in his Commandments.

Theol. The greatest part of men are like the Gadarens, which esteemed their swine more then Christ. As we see in these our days, how many make more account of their kine and sheep, then of the most glorious Gospel of Christ. They highly esteem dung, and contemn pearl. They are careful for trifles, and regard not the things of greatest moment; and therefore may fitly be compared to a man, who having his wife and children very sick, doth utterly neglect them, and is altogether careful for the curing of his hogs ears.

Phil. We are somewhat digressed from the matter we had in hand: I pray you therefore, if you have any more matter of good counsel to give to Asunetus, that you would presently deliver it.

Theol. I have little more to say, save only I would advise him oft en to remember, and to muse on these things.

The

The Plaine Man's

The evil he hath committed.

The good he hath omitted.

*Nine things
much to be
thought on.*

The time that he hath im-
spent.

The shortness of his life.

The vanity of this world.

The Excellency of the world to come.

Death, then the which nothing is more
terrible.

The day of Judgment, then the which no-
thing is more feartul.

Hell fire, then the which nothing is more
intollerable.

Phil. This is short and sweet indeed. You
have touch'd some of these points before, in
this our conference. But I am very desirous
to hear somewhat more of the two last, which
yet have not been spoken of.

Theo. Sith you are desirous, I will briefly
deliver unto you that which I have received
from the Lord. First concerning the day of
Judgment. I find in the Volume of God's
Book, that it shall be very terrible and dread-
ful. For, The Son of man shall come in the
clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory,
Mat. 24. 30. St. Peter saith, The day of the
Lord shall come as a thief in the night, in the
which the Heavens shall pass away with a
noise, the Elements shall melt with heat, and
the earth, with the works that are therein, shall
be

be burnt up, 2 Pet. 3. 10. The Apostle telleth us, that at Christ's coming the whole world shall be of a light fire; and that all Castles, Towers, goodly Buildings, Gold, Silver, Velvet, Silks, and all the glittering hue, glory and beauty of this world, shall be consumed to powder and ashes. For he saith plainly, *The heavens and the earth which are now, are reserved to fire against the day of judgement, and of the destruction of ungodly men,* 2 Pet. 3. 7. Moreover, he strongly proves, that as the world was once destroyed by water; so the second time, in the end thereof, it shall be destroyed with fire. The Apostle St. Paul witnesseth the same things; for he saith, *Christ shall come from heaven, with all his mighty Angels in flaming fire,* 2 Thes. 1. 7. And in another place he notes the terror of his coming to judgment, saying, *He shall come with a shout, with the voice of the Arch-angel, and the Trumpet of God,* 1 The. 4. 16. We see by experience, that the coming of mortal Princes to any place, is with great pomp and glory. They have great trains and troupes behind them and before them. They are accompanied with many Nobles: goodly Lords, and gallant Ladies do attend upon them. The Sword-bearer, Trumpeters, and Harbingers, go before: many flaunting and stately Personages follow after. Now then,

then, if the coming of mortal Princes be pompous and glorious; how much more glorious shall the coming of the Son of man be, in whose sight all mortal Princes are but dust? The Scriptures do affirm, that his second coming unto judgment shall be with such resplendent and unspeakable glory, that even the most excellent creatures shall blush at it. *For the Sun shall be darkned; the Moon shall not give her light; and the Stars shall fall from heaven, Mat. 24. 29.* Meaning hereby, that the most glorious and bright-shining Creatures shall be clouded and obscured by the unconceivable brightness of Christ's coming.

Moreover, the terrour of Christ's coming is noted unto us in this, that immediately before it, the very Sea shall quake and tremble, and in his kind cry out. For it is said, that *The Sea shall roar, (and make a noise in most doleful and lugubrious manner) and mens hearts shall fail them for fear, and for looking after those things which shall come on the world; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken, Luke 21. 25.* O what shall become of Swearers, Drunkards, Whoremongers and such like, in that day! They shall seek to creep into an anger-hole to hide their heads. They shall then cry wo and alas that ever they were born. They shall wish that they had never

never been born, or that their mothers had born them toads. And as it is in the *Apocalypse*, *They shall say to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the presence of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of his wrath is come, and who can stand?*

We see therefore, that the coming of Christ shall not be base and contemptible, as in his first visitation: but it shall be most terrible, princely, and glorious. And as the Scriptures do affirm, that his coming shall be with great terrour and dread; so also they do shew, that it shall be very sudden and unlooked for, *1 Pet. 3. 10.* For, *the day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night; as the travel that cometh upon a woman, 1 Thes. 5. 2.* As a snare it shall come on all them that dwell in the face of the earth, *Luke 21. 35.* That is, it shall suddenly catch and intangle all men, whatsoever they be in the world. As the Earth-quake which was near ninety years ago, did suddenly take the world tardy: they not thinking of any such matter: So shall the coming of the Son of man to judgment take the world tardy and unprepared: for few there be that think of any such matter. Sith therefore the second appearing of Christ shall be with such suddenness, let us fear and tremble; for all sudden things are to be feared.

Phil.

Phil. Well, Sir, as you have shewed the terror and suddenness of Christ's coming, so shew the purpose and end of his coming.

Theol. The principle end of his coming shall be to keep a general audit, to call all men to an account, to have a reckoning of every man's particular actions, and to reward them according to their deeds: as it is written, The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his Angels, and then he shall give to every man according to his deeds, Mat. 16. 27. Again, the Apostle saith to the Corinthians, We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every man may receive the things which are done in his body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or evil, 2 Cor. 5. 10.

Here we do plainly see, that that the end of Christ's coming shall be to judge every man according to his works; that is, as his works shall declare him, and testify of him, and of his faith. In another place the Apostle saith, that the end of his coming shall be to render vengeance unto them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting perdition from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, 2 Thes. 8. 9. Wo then unto two sorts of men, the ignorant, and the disobedient: For the Apostle saith flatly,

Early, they both shall be damned. Methinks both the ignorant and disobedient, and all other prophane men, should tremble to think of this, that Christ shall come to render vengeance unto them. If we did certainly know that a forraign enemy should invade our Nation, over-run it, and make a conquest of it, that he should shed our blood, destroy us, and make a massacre amongst us; yea, that we should see our wives, our children, our kindred, and dear friends slain before our faces, so as their blood should stream in the streets, what a wonderful fear and terror would it strike into us? we would quake to think of it. Shall we not then be much more afraid of the damnation of our souls? shall we not quake to think that Christ shall come to take vengeance? If the Lyon roar, all the beasts of the field tremble: and shall not we be afraid of the roaring of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah? But alas, we are so hard-hearted, and so rockt asleep in the cradle of security, that nothing can move us, nothing can awake us.

Phil. Now as you have shewed us the terror and end of Christ's coming; so also declare the manner.

Theol. The manner of it is this: that the whole world shall be cited to appear personally, at the general Assizes, before the great Judge. No man shall be admitted to appear by

by his Attorney, but all must appear personally. None shall be suffered to put in fines: but all must come in their own persons without bayl or main-prise; as it is written *We must all appear*, high and low, rich and poor, King and Beggar, one with another as it is plainly set down in the twentieth chapter of the Revelations, where the Spirit saith *I saw the Dead both great and small stand before God; and the Sea gave up the dead which were in her, and Death and Hell delivered the dead which were in them.* So then it is clear, that all, without exception, shall make their appearance at the great and dreadful Assizes. O what a great day will that be when all the whole world shall appear together at once! If a King marry his son, and bid other Kings, Emperors, Dukes and Nobles to the marriage, with all their pomp and train, we use to say, O what a Marriage, what a meeting, what ado, what a great day will there be? But when the universal world shall be assembled together, not only all Monarchs, Kings and Princes, but all other, that ever have been from the beginning of the world, all that are, and shall be, what a day will that be? No marvel therefore, though the Scriptures call it the day of God, and the great day of the Lord. Now then, when all flesh is come together, to make their personal

his appearance, then shall the Son of God ascend unto his Tribunal Seat, with great majesty and glory. For *A fiery Stream shall issue and come forth before him: thousand thousand Angels shall accompany him; and minister unto him; and ten thousand thousand shall stand before him; the judgment shall be set, and the books opened.* All the Saints also, and true worshippers of God shall attend him, and accompy him to his judgment seat. And not only so, but they shall sit upon the Bench and Throne with him: as it is written, *1 Cor. 6. 2. The Saints shall judge the world: they shall judge the Angels: That is, the Devils, the Angels of darkness.* Our Lord Jesus himself did avouch the same thing when he said to his Disciples, and in them to all true Christians, *Verily I say unto you, that when the Son of man shall sit in the Throne of his Majesty, ye which followed me in the Regeneration, shall sit upon the twelve Thrones, and judge the twelve Tribes of Israel: Mat. 19. 28.* That is, the Saints of God shall bear witness that the judgment of Christ, and sentence of condemnation which he passeth against all unbelievers, is according to Justice and Equity. Thus then we see how Christ shall be accompanied to his Throne, and with what glory and majesty he shall ascend unto it. Experience teacheth, that when mortal Judges hold

hold their Sessions and general Assizes, are brought unto the Bench and Judgment-seat with pomp and terror. For the Sheriffs of the Shire, and Halberd-men, with many Justices of Peace, and trains of others, accompany them unto the Bench. Then will how much more glory and majesty shall the Son of God be brought unto his Royal Throne? Thus then, Christ being set upon his Judgment-seat, all the ungodly shall be convened before him, and he shall stand over them with a naked sword in his hand; the Devil shall stand by them on the one side to accuse them, and their own consciences on the other side, and the gaping gulph of Hell underneath them, ready to devour them. Then shall the books be opened; not any books of Paper and Parchment, but the books of men's Consciences: for every man's sins are written and recorded in his conscience, as it were in a Register book. Then will God bring every work to judgment, with every secret thought, and set them in order before all the reprobates. Then will God lighten the things that are hid in darkness: and make the counsels of the heart manifest, 2 Cor. 4. 5. Then shall all the ungodly be arraigned, convicted, and hold up their hands at the Bar of Christ's Tribunal Seat, and shall cry, guilty. Then shall that most dreadful sentence of Death and

Con-

condemnation be pronounced against them by the most righteous Judge, *Go ye Cursed into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, Mat. 25. 41. O terrible sentence! O heavy hearing! Whose heart doth not tremble at these things? Whose hair doth not stand up on their heads? For then shall thousands, which in this world have flourished as the Ceders of *Lebanus*, be cast down for evermore, and shall drink (as a just recompence for their iniquity) of the bitter cup of God's eternal wrath and indignation, in the kingdom of darkness, and in the fearful presence of Satan, and all the cursed enemies of God's grace.

Phil. Well, now as you have declared unto us the terror, the suddenness, the end, and the manner of Christ's coming to judgment; so lastly, shew us the right use of all these things.

Theol. St. Peter telleth and teacheth us the right use of all; for, saith he, Seeing all these things must be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in holy Conversation and Godliness? 2 Pet. 3. 11. As if he should say, Sith the Heavens shall pass away with a noise, the Elements shall melt with heat, and the Earth with the works that are therein, shall be burnt up: sith also the coming of Christ shall be with great terror, to a fearful end,
and

and in a fearfull manner: O how ought we
 excel in goodnes? So then, Saint *Peter* te
 leth us, that the true use of all is this; that he
 by we be brought nearer unto God, even
 be more obedient to his will, and to walke
 all his commandments, making conscience
 all our ways, and studying to please God
 all things, and to be fruitful in all good worke
 living soberly, justly, and holily in this pre
 sent evil world, and shewing forth the ver
 rues of him which hath called us out of dark
 ness to this marvellous light: that so we may
 be prepared against the day of his appearing
 that it may not take us tardy. For our li
 ought to be a continual meditation of death:
 we should always live as if we should dye, or
 that our bed should be our grave: we must
 live continually as if Christ should come to
 judgement presently; as it is reported of a
 godly man in the Primitive Church, that whe
 ther he eat or drank, or whatsoever he did, he
 thought always he heard the trumpet of the
 Lord, with these words, *Arise ye dead, and
 come to Judgment.* Put case it were certain
 ly known, that Christ would come to judge
 ment, the next Midsummer day; O what an
 alteration would it make in the world! How
 would men change their minds and affections?
 who would care for this world? who would
 set his heart upon riches? who would regard
 brave

grave apparel? who durst deceive or oppress?
 who durst be drunk? who durst swear, lye,
 and commit adultery? Nay, would not all
 men give up themselves to the obedience of
 God? would not all serve him diligently?
 would not all men and women flock to Ser-
 mons? would they not give up themselves to
 prayer and reading? would they not repent
 them of their sins? would they not cry for
 mercy and forgiveness? See then what the
 knowledge of a certain day approaching
 would effect. And ought we not to do all these
 things with as great care and zeal, seeing the
 day is uncertain? For who knoweth whe-
 ther Christ will come this month or the next,
 this year or the next? He himself saith, *Be
 ready, Watch, for in the hour that ye think
 not of, will the Son of man come,* Mat. 24.
 44. We think he will not come this year,
 nor next year, nor this hundred years. It
 may be therefore that he will come suddenly
 upon us, we know not how soon: For in an
 hour that we little think of, will he come.
 Therefore our Saviour saith in the thirteenth
 Chapter of *Mark*, Verse 33. *Take heed,
 Watch and Pray; for you know not when the
 time is.* And in the Gospel of *St. Luke*, he
 saith, *Take heed that your hearts be not over-
 come with surfeising, and drunkenness, and
 the cares of this life; and so that day come up-*

on you unawares. For as a snare shall it come upon all them that dwell upon the face of the earth, Luke 21. 34, 35. We hear therefore how many watch-words and caveats our Saviour giveth us, when he saith, Be in readiness, awake, take heed, watch and pray, and look about you, lest that day come suddenly upon you, and take you napping. It standeth us all therefore upon, to be at an hours warning, upon pain of death, and as we will answer it at our uttermost peril.

Phil. Proceed to speak of the torments of Hell.

Theol. Concerning the torments of Hell, I do note three things, which I will briefly speak of, and they be these: The extremity, perpetuity, and remedilessness thereof: First, touching the extremity thereof, it standeth specially in these three things: First, that it is a separation from all Joy and Comfort of the Presence of God. Secondly, that it is an eternal fellowship with the Devil and his Angels. Thirdly, it is a feeling of the horrible wrath of God, which shall seize upon body and soul, and shall feed on them (as fire doth upon pitch and brimstone) for ever. The Scripture doth note the extremity of it, in calling it, *A lake that burns with fire and brimstone for ever*: in saying, *There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*: in affirming, that

that their worm dyeth not: (meaning the worm that gnaweth their conscience, or the torment of conscience) and the fire never goeth out: interming it, Tophet, which is deep and large, and the burning thereof is fire and much wood: and that the breath of the Lord, as a river of brimstone, doth kindle it, Apoc. 21. 8. Luk. 13. 28. Mat. 8. 12. All these things be terrible to our senses, and yet can they not fully express the thing as it is indeed. For no heart can conceive, or tongue express, the greatness and extremity of the torments of Hell. As the joys of Heaven never entred into the heart of man; no more did the torments of Hell. All the torments and troubles that fall upon men in this life, are but the sparkles of the furnace of God's total wrath. All fires are but as it were pictures of fire, in comparison of Hell-fire. For as one writeth. Hell-fire is so extearmely hot, that it will burn up a man seven miles before he come at it. Yet the Reprobates, being always in it, shall never be consumed of it. As the Salamander is always in the fire, and never consumeth: so the wicked shall be always in the fire of Hell, and never consume. For Hell is a death always living, and an end always beginning. It is a grievous thing to a man that is very sick, to lye along upon a feather-bed, how much more upon a hot gridiron?

Q

but

but how most of all to burn always in Hell fire, and never be consumed? Another extremity of it consisteth in this, that the torments of Hell are universal; that is, in every member at once, head, eyes, tongue, teeth, throat, stomach, back, belly, heart, sides, &c. All punishments of this life are particular: for some are pained in their head, some in back, some in stomach, &c. yet some particular pains are such as a man would not suffer to gain all the world. But for a man to be tormented in all parts at once, what sight more lamentable? who could but take pitty of a Dog in the street in that case? Thus then we see, that the extremity of Hell torments is greater then can be conceived or uttered. For who can utter that which is incomprehensible? We can go no further in comprehending that which is incomprehensible, then to know it to be incomprehensible.

Phil. As you have shewed us the extremity of Hell torments, so now proceed to the perpetuity.

Theol. The Scriptures do set forth the perpetuity of Hell torments, in saying, they are for ever. The wicked shall be cast into the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever. The fire never goeth out. When as many hundred thousand years are expired, as there be stones by the Sea side, yet still there be

be so many more to come. For that which hath no end, can never come to an end. If all the Arithmeticians in the world were set a work, to do nothing but number all the days of their life, even the greatest numbers that they could possibly set down, and should in the end add all their numbers together, yet could they never come any thing near to that length of time wherein the wicked shall be tormented. If the whole circumference of the Heavens were written about with figures of Arithmetick, from the East to the West, and from the West to the East again; yet could it not contain that infinite time, and innumerable years, wherein all unbelievers shall suffer eternal torture. For in things infinite, time hath no place. For time is the measure of those things which are subject to measure. Therefore because Hell torments are infinite, they cannot be measured by any time; neither can that which is infinite be diminished. For if you subtract from that which is infinite, ten thousand thousand millions of millions, yet is it thereby nothing diminished or made less.

Put case a man should once in an hundred thousand years take a spoonful of water out of the great Ocean Sea, how long would it be ere he had so emptied it? Yet shall a man sooner empty the Sea, by taking a spoonful once in an hundred thousand years, then the

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damned soul shall have any ease. Therefore a certain Writer saith, *If the damned soul might be tormented in Hell but a thousand years, and then have ease, there were some comfort in it: (for then there would be hope it would come to an end)* but, saith he, *this word Ever, killeth the heart.* O consider this, ye that forget God, O ye carnal Worldlings, think on this in time. For if you will not now be moved in hearing, you shall then be crushed in pieces in feeling. What avail-eth it to live in all possible pleasures and carnal delights here for some sixty years, and then to suffer this eternal torment? *What shall it profit a man to win the whole world, and lose his soul?* They be more then mad, which will hazard their soul for a little profit, and a few stinking pleasures. But this is the manner of men: they will have the present sweet, (come of it what will) though they pay never so dear for it, though they go to the highest price: though they lose their souls for it. Oh the unspeakable blindness and madness of the men of this world! The Devil hath put out their eyes, and therefore leadeth them whither he lists. For who cannot lead a blind man whither he lists? *Nabash the Ammonite would make no covenant with the Israelites, but upon condition that he might put out all their right eyes, 1 Sam. 11. 2.* So the Devil doth

doth covenant with all the wicked, to put out both their eyes, that he may lead them directly into Hell.

Phil. Now, Sir, a word or two more of the remedilessness of Hell-fire.

Theol. The Scriptures do affirm, that as the torments of Hell are extream, so they are without all hope of remedy: as it is written, *A man can by no means redeem his brother: he cannot give his ransom unto God; so precious is the redemption of the soul, and the continuance for ever, Psa. 49. 7, 8.* To this purpose *Abraham* said to the rich man, being in Hell-torments, *Betwixt you and us, there is a great gulph set, so that they which would go from hence to you, cannot; neither can they come from thence to us, Luk. 16. 26.* Our Lord *Jesus* also saith, *What shall a man give for the recompence of his soul? Mat. 16. 26.* Where our Saviour doth plainly affirm, that there is no ransom or recompence, though never so great, to be given for a damned soul. For the soul being in Hell, can never be released, it is past remedy, no means whatsoever can do any good; no gold, no silver, no friends, no riches, no power, no policy, no flattery, no bribery, no reach, no fetch or device whatsoever, can prevail one jot: for a man being once in Hell, hath no remedy; he is in close prison; he is shut up under the hatches

ches for ever; there is no getting out again: he must suffer perpetual imprisonment. He cannot bring a Writ of false imprisonment, because he is laid in by the most righteous and just Judge, who cannot possibly do any wrong, but he must lye by it. For being there once, he is there for ever. If all the Angels of Heaven should intreat for a damned soul; if *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, should make great suit; if all the Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs, should be continual solicitors to Christ for release; if the father should make request for his son, or the mother for her daughter, yet can none of these be heard; they must all have the repulse. For the sentence of Christ cannot be reversed, his decree is unrepealable. The due consideration of all these things may make all hearts to quake, and all knees to tremble. In the troubles and afflictions of this life, though a man come in never so great danger, yet he may winde out again by one means or another, by money, or friendship, or rewards, or such like means; but in Hell fire, this it is that gripes and maketh the heart despair, that there is no remedy at all to be used. If we should ask of a damned soul, or an afflicted conscience, what they would give for the ease and redemption of their souls, they would answer, The whole world: howsoever secure worldlings and wicked Atheists (which see nothing, or feel nothing) make nothing of it.

Here,

Here, by the way, let us consider the greatness of the loss of man's soul; which we shall the better perceive and see into, if we can aright value and prize the soul. If therefore it be demanded, what is the price of the soul, or what is it worth? Our Lord Jesus answereth, that it is more worth then all the world. For, saith he, *What shall it profit a man to win all the world, and lose his soul*, Mat. 16. 26. Therefore the soul of the poorest begger is more worth then all the world. Then I reason thus: If the soul be more worth then all the world, then the lost of it is greater then the loss of the whole world. For indeed it is a loss of all losses, an unrecoverable loss. If a man should have his house burnt over his head, and all that he hath consumed in one night, it were a great loss. If a Merchant-venturer should lose twenty thousand pounds in one venture, in one ship, or (as they say) in one bottom, it were a very great loss. If a King should lose his Crown and Kingdom, it were an exceeding great loss. But the loss of the soul is a thousand times more then all these, it is a matter of infinite importance. If a Tenant be cast out of the favor of his Land-lord, it is a matter of grief. If a Noble man's Secretary be cast out of favor with his Lord, so that he taketh a pritch against him, it is a matter of great sorrow. If a Noble man himself be discountenanced,

and cast out of all favor with his Prince, that was in great favor, it is a curse, a heart-smart and a matter of exceeding grievance. But to be eternally separated from God, to be shut out of his favor, and to be cast away from his presence, and the presence of his Angels is a matter of infinite more dolour and torment. Mark then and behold what a thing it is for a man to lose his soul. Oh therefore that men would be wise in Gods fear, that they would look out in time, and make provision for their souls. Now then, to close up this whole point: the summ of all that hath been said, is this, That the torments of Hell are endless, caseless and remediless.

Asun. The laying open of these doctrines of Hell fire, and the judgement to come, makes me quake and tremble: I am much thereby perplexed, I feel great terror in my conscience, I am afraid I shall be damned.

Antil. Damned, man! what speak you of damning? I am ashamed to hear you say so; For it is well known that you are an honest man, a quiet liver, a good neighbor, and as good a towns-man as any in the Parish where you dwell, and you have been always so reputed and taken. If you should be damned, I know not who shall be saved.

Asun. I regard not your flatteries. I believe God, I believe his Word; I believe those things which

which Master Theologus hath alleadged out of the holy Scriptures, pointing me both to the Chapter and the Verse : and whether it be more meet that I should believe the Scriptures, or your soothings, judge you. No, no; now I do clearly see, by the glass of Gods Law, that my state is wretched and miserable. For I have lived in sin and ignorance all the days of my life, being utterly void of all Religion and true knowledge of God. I am not the man indeed that you and others take me for. For though outwardly I have lived honestly to the world-ward, yet inwardly I have not lived religiously to God-ward.

Antil. Tush, tush; now I see you are in a melancholy humour. If you will go home with me, I can give you a speedy remedy, for I have many pleasant and merry books, which if you should hear them read, would soon remedy you of this melancholy humour. I have the Court of Venus, The Palace of pleasure, Bevis of South-hampton, Ellen of Rummán, The merry jest of the Fryer and the Boy, The pleasant story of Clem of the Clough, Adam Bell, and William of Cloudestly, The old tale of William, Richard and Humphry, the pretty conceits of John Splinters lust Will and Testament; which all are excellent and singular books against heart-qualms, and to remove such dumphishness as I see you are now fallen in:o.

Alun. Your vain and frivolous books of tales, jests, and lies, would more increase my grief, and strike the print of sorrow deeper into my heart.

Antil. Nay, if you be of that mind, I have done with you.

Phil. I pray you, if a man may be so bold with you, how came you by all these good books? I should have said, so much trash and rubbish.

Antil. What mattereth it to you? What have you to do to inquire? But, I pray you, Sir, what do you mean to call them trash and rubbish?

Phil. Because they be no better. They be goodly geer, trim stuff! They are good to kindle a fire, or to scoure an hot Oven withal. And shall I tell you my opinion of them? I do thus think, That they are devised by the Devil, seen and allowed by the Pope, printed in Hell, bound up by Hobgoblin, and first published and dispersed in Rome, Italy, and Spain: and all to this end, that thereby men might be kept from the reading of the Scriptures. For even as a Lapwing with her busie cry draweth men away from her nest, so the Popish generation, by these fabulous devices, draw men from the Scriptures.

Antil. Ah Sir, I see now a fools bolt is soon shot. You are more precise then wise, The Vicar of Saint Fools shall be your ghostly Father.

What

What tell you me of your opinion? I would you should well know, I neither regard you, nor your opinion. There be wiser men then you, who both read, allow, and take pleasure in these books.

Theol. Let him alone, good Philagathus, for you see what he is, there is no end of his crossing and cavilling. But he that is ignorant, let him be ignorant, and he that is filthy, let him be more filthy. Let us now turn our speech to *Asunetus*, for I see he is heavy-hearted, and troubled in his mind. How do you, *Asunetus*? how do you feel your self? Me thinks you are very sad.

Asun. I am the better for you, Sir, I thank God: I never knew what sin meant till this day. It hath pleased God now to give me some sight and feeling thereof. I am greatly distressed in my conscience to think what I have been. The remembrance of my former sins, do strike an horror into me. When I consider how ignorantly and profanely, and how far off from God I have lived all my life, it stings and gripes me to the heart. I do now see that which I never saw, and feel that which I never felt. I do plainly see, that if I had dyed in that state wherein I have lived all my life, I should certainly have been condemned, and should have perished for ever in my sin and ignorance.

Theol. I am very glad that that God hath opened

opened your eyes, and given you the sight and feeling of your misery; which indeed is the very first step to eternal life. It is a great favor and special mercy of God towards you, that he hath so touched your heart, you can never be thankful enough for it. It is more then if you had a million of Gold given you. It is the only rare priviledge of Gods Elect, to have the eyes of their souls opened, that they may see into heavenly and spiritual things. As for the world, it is just with God to leave them in their blindness.

Asun. I do feel the burden of my sins: I am greatly grieved for them. I am weary of them. I am sorry that ever I sinned against God, or that I should be such a wretch, as to incur his displeasure, and provoke his Majesty against me. But I pray you, good Master Theologus, since you are a spiritual Physitian, and I am sick of sin, that you would minister unto me out of Gods Word, some spiritual physick and comfort.

Theol. Truly, I must needs think, that the promises of mercy, and forgiveness of sin made in the Gospel, do belong unto you, and that Jesus Christ is yours; that you are truly interested in him, and have a proper right unto him. For he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. You do now feel your self to be a sinner; you are grieved

grieved for your sins; you are weary of them; therefore Jesus Christ is for you, all the benefits of his passion belong to you. Again he saith, *The whole need not the Physitian, but they that are sick*, Mat. 9. 12. But you do acknowledge your self to be sick of sin; therefore Jesus Christ will be your Phylitian: he will swaddle you, he will lap you; he will bind up all your sores; he will heal all your wounds; he will anoint them with the oyl of his mercy; he will smile upon you, and shew you a joyful countenance; he will say unto you, Your sins are forgiven.

In him you shall have rest and peace to your soul. Through him you shall have ease and comfort. For he takes pittie of all such as mourn for their sins as you do. He biddeth you, and all that are in your case, to come unto him, and he will help you. *Come unto me* (saith he) *all you that are weary and heavy laden, and I will ease you*, Mat. 11. 28. You are one of them that are bidden to come, for you are weary of your sins: you feel the burthen of them. Christ is altogether for such as you are. He regardeth not the world, that is, the prophane and unregenerate men. He bids not them come; he prayeth not for them. *I pray not for the world* (saith he) *Joh. 17. 9*. They have no part nor interest in him. They have nothing to do with him or with his me-

sins and righteousness. He is only for the
 penitent sinner, and such as mourn for their
 sins. He is a Pillow of Down to all aking
 heads, and aking consciences. Be of good
 comfort therefore, fear nothing: for assured-
 ly Christ and all his righteousness is yours.
 He will cloath you with it. He will never im-
 pute your sins unto you, or lay any of them
 to your charge; though they be so many or
 so great; he will forget them, and forgive
 them; as he saith by the Prophet *Esay*, *Though*
your sins were as crimson, they shall be made as
white as snow; though they were red like scar-
let, they shall be as wooll, Isa. 1. 28. And a-
 gain, he saith by the same Prophet, *I have*
put away thy transgressions as thick as Clouds,
and thy sins as a mist, Isa. 44. 22. By ano-
 ther Prophet he saith, *He will lay aside our*
iniquities, and cast all our sins into the bottom
of the Sea, Mic. 7. 19. Again, he saith by
 the Prophet *Esay*, *I, even I, am he that put*
away thine iniquities for my own sake, and will
not remember thy sins, Isa. 43. 25. And yet
 more sweetly he speaks to us by the Prophet
Jeremy saying, *Turn again unto me, and I*
will not let my wrath fall upon you. For I
am merciful, and will not alway keep mine an-
ger, Jer. 3. 12. And again by the Prophet
Hosea, he saith, *I will not execute the fierce-*
ness of my wrath, I will not return to destroy E-
 phraim.

phraim; for I am G O D, and not Man, Hos. 11. 9. Be of good cheer therefore, comfort your self with these promises: you have cause to rejoyce, seeing G O D hath wrought in you a dislike and a grief for your sins, which is a certain token that your sins shall never hurt you; for sins past cannot hurt us, if sins present do not like us. You are grown to an hatred and dislike of your sins, you mourn under the burden of them, therefore you are blessed. For *blessed are they that mourn*. Why therefore should you be so heavy and sad? Remember what St. John saith, *If any man sin, we have an Advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the reconciliation for our sins*, 1 Joh. 2. 1. St. Paul saith, *that Jesus Christ is set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood*, Rom. 3. 2. 5. Again, the Holy Ghost saith, *He is perfectly able to save all those that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us*, Heb. 7. 25. The Apostle saith, *He is made of God for us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. Mark that he saith, All is for us, all is for his Church, for every member of his Church, and therefore for you: Christ is made of God righteousness, sanctification, and redemption for you: Christ is your Mediator, and your high Priest, and hath offered up the everlasting sacrifice, even for

for you, that he might pay your ransome and redeem you from all iniquity. By his own blood hath he entred once into the holy place, and obtained eternal redemption for you, Heb. 9. 12. Christ is not entred into the holy places which are made with hands, which are similitudes of the true Sanctuary, but is entred into the very Heaven, to appear now in the sight of God for you, Heb 9. 24. The Apostle saith, *He hath made him to be sin for you, that knew no sin, that you might be made the righteousness of God in him.* Christ was made a curse for you, that he might redeem you from the curse of the Law, 2 Cor. 5. 21. Gal. 3. 13. Oh therefore how happy art thou that hast such a Mediator and high Priest! Rest therefore wholly upon him and upon that perfect, eternal, and propitiatory sacrifice which he hath once offered. Apply Christ, apply his merits apply the promises to your self, and to your own conscience, so shall they do you good, and bring great comfort to your soul. For put case you had a most excellent and soveraign salve, which would cure any wound, if it were laid to; yet if you should lock it up in your chest, and never apply it to your wound, what good could it do you? Even so the righteousness and merits of Christ, are a spiritual Salve, which will cure any wound of the soul; but if we do not apply them to our

our souls by faith, they can do us no good. You must therefore apply Christ and all the promises of the Gospel, to your self by faith, and stand fully perswaded that whatsoever he hath done upon the Cross, he hath done for you particularly. For what is justifying faith, but a full perswasion of Gods particular love to us in Christ? the general and confused knowledge of Christ and his Gospel avails not to eternal life. Labor therefore to have the true use of all these great and precious promises; and stick fast to Christ: for through him only we have remission of sins, and eternal Life. *To him all the Prophets give witness (saith Saint Peter) that through his name all that believe, shall receive remission of their sins, Act. 10. 43.* Where the Apostle tels us, that if a great Jury of Prophets were pannelled to testify of the way and means to eternal Life, they would all, with one consent, bring in a verdict, that remission of sins and eternal life, are only in Christ. Let us hear the Fore-man speak, and one or two of the rest; for in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word stand. The Prophet *Esay* saith *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was broken for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed, Isa. 53. 5.* This great Prophet we see plainly affirms, that Christ suffered for our sins,

sins, and by his suffering we are saved. The Prophet Jeremy testifies the same thing, saying, *Behold the day is come, (saith the Lord) that I will raise to David a righteous branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute Judgement and Justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is the name whereby they shall call him, The Lord our righteousness,* Jer. 23. 5. This Prophet jumps with the others. For he saith that Christ is the righteous branch, and that he is our righteousness: which is all one, as if he had said, Our sins are pardoned only through him, and through him we are made righteous. Moreover, he affirms, that *Judah and Israel, that is, the Church, shall be saved by him. The Prophet Zachary, that I may speak it with reverence, telleth the same tale, word for word. He avoucheth the same thing with the other two Prophets; for he saith, In that day a fountain shall be opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness,* Zac. 13. 1. The meaning of the Prophet is, that in the days of Christs Kingdom, the fountain of Gods mercy in Christ, should be opened and let out to wash away the sins and uncleanness of the Church. So then we see that these three great witnesses do all agree in this, that through Christ only we are washed from our sins,

sins, and through him only we are made righteous. Seeing then that eternal life is only in the Son, therefore he that hath the Son hath life. Be of good courage therefore, O *Assuetus*; for no doubt you have the Son, and therefore eternal life. Fear not your sins, for they cannot hurt you: For as all the righteousness of *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, and all the most righteous men that ever lived on the face of the earth, if it were yours, could do you no good without Christ: so all the sin in the world can do you no hurt being in Christ; For there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ *Jesus*, *Rom. 8. 1.* Pluck up a good heart therefore, be no more heavy and sad; for if you be found in Christ, cloathed with his perfect righteousness, (being made yours through faith) what can the Devil say to you? what can the Law do? They may well hiss at you, but they cannot sting you; they may grin at you, but they cannot hurt you, *Rom. 8. 33 34.* For who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God that justifies, who shall condemn? It is Christ which is dead, or rather which is risen again; who also sitteth at the right hand of GOD, and makes request for us, *Phil. 4. 4.* Rejoyce in the Lord therefore, again, I say, rejoyce: for greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. Our Lord Jesus is stronger
than

then all. None can pluck you out of his hands: he is a strong *Mediator*, he hath conquered all our spiritual enemies: he hath overcome Hell, Death, and Damnation: he hath led captivity captive: he hath spoiled principalities, and powers, and hath made an open shew of them, and triumphed over them on his Cross, *Col. 2. 15.* He hath most triumphantly said, *O death, I will be thy death: O grave, I will be thy destruction,* *Hos. 13. 14.* *O death, where is thy sting? O hell, where is thy victory?* *1 Cor. 15. 55.* Seeing then you have such a Mediator and high Priest, as hath conquered the hellish army, and subdued all infernal power, what need you doubt? what need you to fear any more? Moreover, you are to understand, and to be persuaded that Gods mercy is exceeding great towards penitent sinners, and all such as mourn for their transgressions: according as he saith, *At what time soever a sinner doth repent him of his sins from the bottom of his heart, he will put them all out of his remembrance.* The Prophet *David* doth most lively and fully describe unto us the merciful nature of God, in the 103 Psalm, where he saith. *The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger, and of great kindness: he will not always chide, neither keepeth his anger for ever: he hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.*

iniquities. For as high as the heaven is above the earth, so great is his mercy towards those that fear him. As far as is the East from the West, so far he hath removed our sins from us. As a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear him. For he knows whereof we be made, he remembereth we are but dust. The History of the lost son, doth most notably set forth the wonderful mercy of God towards penitent sinners. There is shewed how the Lord doth embrace, tender, and make much of such poor sinners, as have broken and contrite hearts for their sins: for it is said, that when the father saw his repenting son a great way off, he had compassion on him, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him, and cloathed him with the best robe, put it on him, put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and caused the fat Calf to be killed for him, *Luk. 15. 20.* Even so the everlasting Father doth rejoyce at the conversion of any of his lost sons. Yea, there is joy in the presence of the Angels of God for one sinner that converteth. Moreover, the Lord most lively expresth his merciful nature and disposition in this; That he is very loth we should perish, and willingly cast away our selves. Therefore often in the holy Scriptures, he mourns for us, bewails our wretchedness, and takes up many pittiful complaints

plaints and lamentation for us, saying, *O that my people had hearkned unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways, Psal. 81. 13. And again, O that thou hadst hearkned unto my Commandments; then had thy prosperity been as the flood, and thy righteousness as the waters of the Sea, Isa. 48. 18. Again, he mourningly complains by his Prophet Hosea, saying, O Ephraim, what shall I do to thee? O Judah, how shall I intreat thee? Isa. 5. 4. And in another place, What could I do more to my Vineyard that I have not done? Mark here how compassionately the Almighty God doth yern over us, and even as it were bleed upon our wounds. The Apostle also notes the rich mercy and marvellous love of GOD to mankind in this, that he doth beseech us, and pray us by the Ministers of the Gospel, that we would be reconciled unto him. The words are these; *Now then are we Ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you through us, we pray you in Christs stead, that you be reconciled unto God.* Is it not a strange thing that the omnipotent God should fall to entreating of us poor wretches? It is all one as if a King should entreat a Begger, whom he may will and command. But the abundant mercy of GOD, towards mankind, doth most of all consist in this, that he hath given his only Son for us, when we were his enemies: as it*

is written, God so loved the world, that he hath given his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on him should not perish, but have everlasting life, John 3. 14. Again, God sets out his love towards us, seeing that while we were yet sinners, Christ dyed for us, much more then being now justified by his Blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life, Rom. 5. 10. In all this then we may clearly behold the infinite mercy of God towards us poor sinners. For is it not a great matter, that the Son of God should take our nature upon him, should be so abase as he was, and should humble himself to death, even to the death of the Cross? *Phil.* 2. 8. For as the shadow of the Dial went back ten degrees, that *Ezekias* might receive length of days and much happiness, so Christ the Son of Righteousness, hath gone back many degrees, that we might have eternal life. His humiliation therefore is our exaltation, his sufferings our joy, his death our life. For we have no other remedy or refuge, but only his merits and righteousness. He is our City of refuge, whither we must fly, and where we must take sanctuary. He is the balm of *Gilead*, whereby our souls are cured, *Jer.* 46. 11. He is that pool of *Bethesda*, where

where every man may be cured, of what disease soever he hath, *Job. 5. 2.* He is the River of *Jordan*, where *Naaman* may wash away all his Leprosie. He is that Pelican, who by pecking a hole in his own breast, doth restore his young to life again by his blood, *2 King. 5.* Yet one thing we must note by the way, which hath been partly touched before, That all the mercies of God, and merits of Christ, are to be restrained only to the Elect, only to the true members of the Church, as plainly appeareth in *Psal. 103.* where the mercies of God, which are there largely described, are restrained only to them that fear him, keep his covenant, and think upon his Commandments to do them. And touching Christ it is said, That he is a Prince and a Saviour unto *Israel*, and that he shall redeem *Israel* from all his iniquities, *Psa. 130. 8.* Again, it is written, that Christ being consecrated, was made the Author of eternal salvation, to them that obey him, *Heb. 5. 9.* None do or can obey him, but only the Elect, therefore he is the Author of salvation only to the Elect. And consequently, the profane world, whatsoever they say, whatsoever they brag and boast, have no true title, or interest in him. This thing was figured in the Law, in this, that the Mercy-seat, which was a type of God's mercy in Christ; and the Ark which was a figure of the Church, were by the express

press Commandment of God, fitted each to o-
ther, both in length and breadth. For as the
Ark was two Cubits and a half long, and a cubit
and a half broad; just so was the Mercy-seat.
Noting thereby, that the mercy of God in
Christ should only be fitted to his Church, and
belong only to the Church, so as not one with-
out the Church should be saved. For he that
hath not the Church for his Mother, cannot
have God for his Father. Last'y, we are to
observe, that as God is infinite in mercy, and of
great compassion toward penitent sinners; so al-
so is he most constant in the course of his mer-
cies towards his children. And therefore one
of the Psalms carries this foot, *His mercy en-
dureth for ever, his mercy endureth for ever, his
mercy endureth for ever*, Psa. 136. Noting there-
by both the constancy and eternity of God's
mercy. To the same purpose it is thus written,
*It is the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed,
it is because his compassions fail not*, Lam. 3. 22.
Let us know therefore, that God, as touching his
mercy to his children, is of a most constant and
unchangeable nature. As he saith, *I am the
Lord, I change not*. For if God were of a
changeable nature, as we are, and subject to
passions, then were we in a most miserable case
then must he needs smite us down, and take
vengeance of us every day, and every hour in
the day, because we provoke him every day,

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and

and every hour in the day. But the God of Heaven is not as a man, that he should be subject to passions and affections; he is of a most constant and immutable nature. For though we provoke him every day with new sins, yet he is so far off from taking revenge, that the next day he rewardeth us with new mercies, and breaketh through all our unkindness to new kindness to us; and through all our naughty-ness to do us good. All our infirmities cannot make him break off with us, or cease to love us. He is content to take us with all faults, & to love us dearly, though we have great faults. He regardeth not our infirmities, though we be oftentimes way-ward and evil, yet for all that he loveth us nevertheless. Even as a loving Mother, though her young suckling cry all the night, and be exceeding trease and way-ward, so as she cannot rest an hour in the night, yea, though she endure much loathsomness & trouble with it, yet in the morning when she riseth she loveth it never the less, but dandleth it, playeth with it, smileth and laugheth upon it. So the God of all mercies, whose love towards us far passeth the love of mothers, though we grieve him with our infirmities continually, yet loveth us nevertheless, and is content to put up all, to forget and forgive all; for he is a most constant lover. Where he once sets and settles his love, he loveth most constantly; nothing

thing can alter him, nothing can remove him. Even as a Father, when his little child catched a fall, breaketh his shins, and hurteh his face, is so far from being offended or displeased with him, therefore, that he doth pittie him, & bemoan him, seeking remedies for his hurt: So our merciful Father is so far off from being angry & displeased with us for some slips and falls, that he doth the more pity us, and lament our case. Even as a loving and wise husband, although his wife have many infirmities, yet being assured she loves him dearly, and that her heart is with him, he is well content to wink at all her faults, and hide them, to bear with them; yea, and to make nothing of them, loving her no whit the less for them. So our dear Husband and Spouse, Christ Jesus, because he knoweth we love him, and that he hath our hearts, is content to bear with all our infirmities, and to make light of them. For this cause it is, that he saith to his Spouse in the *Canticles*, though she was black and full of infirmities, *Behold thou art all fair, my Love: Behold, thou art fair: thou art all fair, my Love, there is no spot in thee, Can. 4. 1. 7.* Mark, that he calleth the Church, fair, all fair, and without spot; not because she was so in her self, but because she was made so in him; and assuredly the eternal God, beholding her in his Son, doth so esteem and account of her. For as he that beholdeth any thing through a red glass, doth

The Plain Man's

take it to be red as is the colour of the Glass
to God the Father beholding us in his Son, de-
take us to be of the same nature and quality
that he is, that is perfectly righteous. For this
cause it is, that he loveth us, and setteth his
heart upon us, and will not be removed from
us. For his love to his children is always one
and the same, although we have not always
the like sight and feeling of it: as the Moon is
always the same in substance and quantity,
though sometimes it seemeth unto us to be wa-
sted into a very small scantling. Let us know
then, to our great comfort, that the love of
God toward us, in his dear Son, is constant,
and always a like: and that he will not discon-
tenance us, or shake us off for some infirmities,
to nor yet for many infirmities: For the mer-
ciful God doth accept of his children, because
their general care is good, and the universal te-
nour of their life tendeth unto righteousness,
howsoever they may greatly fall in many par-
ticular actions. Two or three fits of an Ague
do not prove a diseased body: nor two or
three good days a sound body: even so some
few infirmities do not argue a wicked man: nor
two or three good actions a good man: but we
must have an eye to the certain and settled course
of a man's life: even as men are truly said to
walk in a way, when they go in it, although
sometimes they trip and stumble: So God's chil-
dren

dren do walk in the way of righteousness, although they sometimes stumble and step out of it, or sometimes be violently hailed out of it by Theeves. For Satan and the violence of our lusts, do often hale us out of the way; but we must get into it again as soon as we are escaped. Now then to conclude and draw to an end: Sith God is so infinitely merciful, and constant in his mercy: sith such great and precious promises are made to us in Christ: sith the Lord doth not regard our infirmities when our hearts are with him: therefore, O *Asunetus*, be of good chear, let nothing trouble you; fear not the assaults of the Devil, regard not his temptations, for assuredly your sins are forgiven. Christ is yours; Heaven is yours; and all the promises of life and salvation belong unto you. So as you need not doubt, you cannot miscary: your name is written in the Book of Life.

Asun. I am greatly comforted and cheared up with your words. Your preaching of the Gospel, and laying open of God's abundant mercy in Christ, and of the Promises, do exceedingly revive me, and even as it were, put new life into me: they are as Sack and Sugar, unto my soul, and sweeter than the honey and the honeycomb: They are as Physick to my sick soul, and as oyntment to my spiritual wounds. I do now begin to see what misery is in man, and what mercy is in God. And I know by wofull experience

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rience, that where misery is not felt, there mercy is not regarded: but now it hath pleased God to give me some feeling of mine own wretchedness and misery, and yet with good comfort in his mercy. For I thank God for it, I begin now to grow to some persuasion, that the promises do belong unto me, my sins are forgiven, and that I am one of them that shall be saved.

Theol. I do greatly rejoyce, that God hath, according to his rich mercy, wrought this good work in you. I do from the bot. om of my heart, give him the praise and glory of it. Happy are you that ever you were born, in whom the Lord hath wrought so gracious a work. It is his high favor and special mercy towards you: for it is the only priviledge and prerogative-royal of God's Children, truly to repent and believe. I beseech God therefore encrease your faith, and to fill you full of joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Antil. The Sun draws low: Asunetus, it is time for you and me to be going.

Phil. Indeed the night will approach by and by, and therefore we must of necessity break off.

Theol. Sith it is so, we will here sur-cease and go no further.

Asun. Sir, I will now take my leave of you: I can never be thankful enough for all the good instructions and comforts which I have heard from

from you this day: I hope I shall remember some of them whilst I live. I do therefore praise God for you, and for your counsel, and for this day, which I hope shall be the first day of my repentance, and true conversion unto God.

Theol. The Lord for his infinite mercy sake grant it And I most humbly beseech the Almighty God, to establish you with his free Spirit, that you may proceed and go forward in a Christian course unto the end.

Phil. I pray you, good Master Theologus, pardon my boldness, for you see I have been very bold to propound many questions unto you, wherein you have fully satisfied me, to the great joy and comfort of my soul, I do therefore praise God for you, and I hope I shall never forget some things you have uttered. But I will now commend you to God, and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build us further.

Theol. Farewell good Philagathus. The Lord bless you and keep you in all your ways: and the God of Heaven preserve us all, and continue us in his fear unto the end.

All Glory be given to God.

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A Morning Prayer, to be used in private FAMILIES:

O Lord our God, and heavenly Father, we thy unwor-
thy children do here come into thy most holy and hea-
venly presence, to give thee praise and glory, for all thy
great mercies and manifold blessings towards us, especially
for that thou hast preserved us this night past, from all the
dangers and fears thereof; hast given us quiet rest to our
bodies, and brought us now safely to the beginning of this
day, and dost now afresh, renew all thy mercies upon us, as
the Eagle reneweth her bill; giving us all things abundan-
tly to enjoy; as food, raiment, health, peace, liberty, and
freedom from many miseries, diseases, casualties, and cala-
mities which we are subject to in this life every minute of
an hour: and not only so, but also for vouchsafing unto us
many good things, not only for necessity, but even for delight
also. But above all (dear Father) we praise thy name for
the blessings of a better life; especially for thy most holy
Word and Sacraments, and all the good we enjoy thereby;
for the continuance of the Gospel amongst us, for the death
of thy Son, and all that happiness which we have thereby;
for that thou hast chosen us to life before we were, and
for thy ever goodnes and undeserved favor towards us;
for that thou hast called us in thine appointed time, justified us by
thy grace, and sanctified us by thy spirit, and adopted us to
be thine own children, and Heirs apparent to the great
glory. O Lord open our eyes every day more and more, to
see and consider of thy great and marvellous love to us in
all these things; that by the due consideration thereof, our
hearts may be drawn yet nearer unto thee, even more to love
thee, fear thee, and obey thee; that as thou art enlarged to-
wards us in mercy, so we may be enlarged towards thee in
thanksgivings and as thou dost abound towards us in good-
ness, so we may abound towards thee in obedience and love.
(dear Father) thou art never weary of doing us
good, notwithstanding all our unthankfulness and ingrati-
tude.

Morning Prayer.

ness, therefore let the consideration of thy great mercy and fatherly kindness towards us, even as it were force our hearts, and compell us to come into thy most glorious presence, with new songs of thanksgiving in our mouths. We pray thee (O most merciful God) to forgive all our unthankfulness, unkindness, profaneness, and great abusing of all thy mercies and especially our abuse and contempt of thy Gospel, together with all other the sins of our life, which we confess are innumerable, and more then can be reckoned up, both in omission of good things, and commission of evil. We most humbly entreat thee to set them all over to the reckoning which thy Son hath made up for them upon his Cross, and never to lay any of them to our charge, but freely forget all, and forgive all. Nail down all our sins and iniquities to the cross of Christ, bury them in his death, bath them in his blood, hide them in his wounds, let them never rise up in judgment against us. Set us free of the miseries that are upon us for sin, and keep back the judgments to come, both of soul, body, goods, and good name. Be reconciled to us in thy dear Son concerning all matters past; not once remembering or repeating to us our old and abominable iniquities, but accept us as righteous in him, imputing his righteousness unto us, and our sins unto him. Let his righteousness satisfy thy Justice for all our unrighteousness, his obedience for our disobedience, his perfection for our imperfection. Moreover, we humbly beseech thy good majesty to give us the true sight and feeling of our manifold sins, that we may not be blinded in them through delight, or hardened in them through custom, as the reprobates are; but that we may be even weary of them and much grieved for them, laboring and striving by all possible means to get out of them. Good Father touch our hearts with true repentance for all sin. Let not us take any delight or pleasure in any sin; but, howsoever we fall through frailty (as we fall often) let us never fall finally, let us never lye down in sin nor continue in sin: but let us get upon our feet again, and turn to thee with all our hearts, and seek thee whilst thou mayst be found, and

Morning Prayer

And thou dost offer grace and mercy unto us. O Lord increase in us that true and lively faith, whereby we may lay hold on thy Son Christ, and rest upon his merits altogether. Give us faith assuredly to believe all thy great and precious promises made in the Gospel, and strengthen us from above, to walk and abound in all the true and sound fruits of faith. Let us walk, not after the flesh but after the spirit. Let us feel the power of thy sons death killing sin in our mortal bodies, and the power of his resurrection, raising us unto newness of life. Let us grow daily in the sanctification of the spirit, and the mortification of the flesh. Let us live holily, justly, and soberly in this present evil world, shewing forth the virtues of thee, in all our particular actions, that we may adorn our most holy profession, and shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and froward generation amongst whom we live, being gainful to all by our lives and conversation, and offensive to none. To this end we pray thee fill us with thy Spirit, and all spiritual graces, as love, wisdom, patience, contentment, meekness, humility, temperance, chastity, kindness, and affability, and stir us up to use prayer and watchfulness, reading & meditation in thy Law, and all other good means, whereby we may grow & abound in all heavenly virtues. Bless us in the use of the means from day to day, make us such as thou wouldest have us to be, and such as we desire to be: work in us both will and deed, purpose and power: For thou, O Lord, art all in all, thou wilt have mercy upon whom thou wilt have mercy, and whom thou wilt thou hardnest. Have mercy upon us therefore, (dear Father,) and never leave us to our selves, nor to our own wills, lusts and desires, but assist us with thy good Spirit, that we may continue to the end in a righteous course; that so at length we may be received into glory, as his partakers of that immortal Crown which thou hast laid up for all that love thee, and truly call upon thee.

Further, we entreat thee, O heavenly Father, to give us all things necessary for this life; as food, raiment, health, peace, liberty, & such freedom from those manifold miseries, which

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which we lye open unto every day; as thou seeft meet. B'less
unto us all the means which thou hast put into our hands for
the sustenance of this frail life B'less our stock & store, corn
and cattle, trades and occupations, and all works of our
hands : for thy blessing only makes rich, and it bringeth no
sorrows with it. Give us therefore such a competency & suf-
ficiency of these outward blessings, as thou in thy heavenly wis-
dom seeft most needful for us. Moreover we humbly beseech
thee (most loving Father) in great mercy look down from
heaven upon thy whole church and every member of it. Be
favorable unto Sion, and build up the wals of Jerusalem.
B'hold with the eye of pity, the great ruins and desolations
of thy church Heal up the wounds, and make up the breac-
hes thereof in all Nations. Regard it as thine own stock
tender it as thine own family; dress it as thine own vine-
yard; and love it as thine own Spouse. Think thoughts of
peace to it, and always look upon it in deep compassion. Bless
it with thy grace, guide it with thy Spirit, & defend it still
by thy mighty power; scatter the devices, confound the
counsels, and overthrow the forces of all that fight against
it. Specially we entreat thee dear Father, to set thy self a-
gainst that Antichrist of Rome, that man of perdition, which
setteth himself against thee, and against all thy people. In
thine appointed time we pray thee give him a deadly down-
fall: Beat down all his power and authority daily more and
more; give free passages to thy Gospel in all Kingdoms, that
Babylon may fall and never rise up again. The more the fa-
vorites and adherents of Rome labor to uphold their Ido-
latrious kingdom, the more let it fall down; even as Dagon
before the presence of thine Ark Pour down the Vials of the
fulness of thy wrath upon the Kingdom of the Beast; & let
their Riches; wealth; credit; and authority, dry up every day
more and more; as the River Euphrates. Let it pity thee, O
Father, to see thine own Spouse sit as a deformed and for-
lorn woman here below; weeping and mourning with her
hair about her neck; having lost all her beauty & comeliness.
Cheer her up (dear Father) gladd her with the joy of thy

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and so deck her and trim her up, that thou
mayst delight in her as a Bridegroom in his Bride. Speciall
we entreat thee, have mercy upon thy Church in this Land :
send good unto us and not evil. Give us not over into the
hands of our cruel enemies; as our sins have deserved Seat-
ure we pray thee (O Lord) the devise, and break the plots
of all such as have plotted the overthrow and utter subver-
sion of this Church and Commonwealth. Bless this Church
more & more with the continuance of true Religion amongst
us, for thy great Names sake, and infinite mercies sake; deal
graciously and favorably with us and our posterity. Turn
from us that vengeance which is due unto us for our sins. For
thou seest how iniquity prevaleth, and the wicked go away
with the goal. Atheism overspreadeth every where, and Po-
pery seemeth to get a head again. Now therefore (dear Fa-
ther) we most humbly beseech thee to take order speedily for
the remedying and repressing of these manifold disorders and
grievous enormities that are amongst us. Be entreated of thy
poor children to be good to this English Nation. Hear the
cries of thine Elect; hear the mourning of them that mourn
in Sion. Let the cries of thy children cry down all the cries
of the sins of the Land and be reconciled unto us in the mul-
titude of thy compassions, that so thou mayest still continue a
most merciful Protector of this thine English Vineyard. We
pray thee (good Father) shew special mercy to our Gover-
nors: Bless and keep them in all their ways; bless their Go-
vernment unto us: Let thine Angels encamp about them, and
let thy holy hand be always over them: keep them from trea-
sons, and deliver them from the treacheries of their enemies:
give them to see what belongs to their Peace, and give them
a heart earnestly bent to set upon the practise of the same: bless
all our Counsellors, & give such success unto all their coun-
sels and policies in matters of State, that we may lead a
quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Bless
all the Nobility, work in them a care to glorify thy Name in
their places: make them faithful to thee, and faithful to the
Land: Direct with thy good Spirit all such as bear the sword

Morning Prayer.

of Justice, that they may draw it out to punish the wicked, and to defend the godly; & that they may with all good care and conscience, discharge the duties of their places, Increase the number of faithful and zealous Ministers in this Church. Send thy Gospel to those places where it is not, & bless it where it is Remember them in thy mercy (O Lord) that are under any cross or affliction whatsoever: be comfortable unto them, heal up their wounds, bind up their sores, put all their tears into thy bottle, and make their bed in all their sorrows, and put such a good end to all their troubles, that they may redound to thy glory, and the furtherance of their own salvation. In the mean time give them patience & constancy, to bear whatsoever it shall please thy merciful hand to lay upon them. Last of all (in a word) we pray thee bless the Magistracy, Ministry, and Commonalty. Bless all thy people, do good to all that are true and upright in their hearts. And so (dear Father) we do commit and commend our selves, our souls and bodies into thy hands, for this day and the rest of our life, praying thee to take care and charge of us. Keep us from all evil, watch over us for our good, let thine Angels encamp about us, let thy holy hand be over us, & keep us in all our ways, that we may live to thy praise and glory here on earth, keeping faith and a good conscience in all our actions; that after this life we may be crowned of thee for ever in thy Kingdom. Grant these things (good Father) to us here present, and to all thine absent, praying thee in Special favor to remember all our friends and kinsfolks in the flesh, all our good Neighbors and well-willers, and all those for whom we are bound to pray, by nature, by deserts, or any duty whatsoever, for Jesus Christ's sake our alone Mediator: To whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be given all praise and glory both now and for evermore. Amen.

An Evening Prayer, to be used in private Families.

O Eternal God, and most loving and dear Father, we thy unworthy children do here fall down at the foot of thy

Evening Prayer.

great Majesty, acknowledging from our hearts, that we are altogether unworthy to come near thee, or to look towards thee, because thou art a God of infinite glory, and we are most vile and abominable sinners, such as were conceived & born in sin and corruption, and such as have inherited our Fathers corruptions, and also have actually transgressed all thy holy Statutes and Laws, both in thoughts, words and deeds, before we knew thee and since. Secretly and openly, with our selves and with others: our particular sins are more then can be numbered, for who knoweth how often he offendeth? But this we must needs confess against our selves, that our hearts are full of pride, covetousness, and the love of this world, full of wrath anger, and impatience; full of lying, disssembling and deceiving; full of vanity, hardness and profaneness; full of infidelity, distrust and self-love; full of lust, uncleanness, and all abominable desires; yea, our hearts are the very sinks of sin, and dunghills of all filthiness. And besides all this we do omit the good things we should do: for there are in us great wants of faith, of love, of zeal, of patience, of contentment, and of every good grace; so as thou hast just cause to proceed to sentence of judgment against us, as most damnable transgressors of all thy holy Commandments; yea such as are sunk in our rebellions, and have many times and often committed high treason against thy Majesty; and therefore thou mayest justly cast us all down into hel-fire, there to be tormented with Satan and his angels for ever. And we have nothing to except against thy Majesty for so doing, sith therein thou shouldst deal with us but according to equity, and our deserts. Wherefore (dear Father) we do appeal from thy justice to thy mercy, most humbly intreating thee to have mercy upon us, and freely to forgive us all our sins past whatsoever, both new and old, secret & open, known and unknown; and that for Jesus Christ's sake our alone Mediator. And we pray thee touch our hearts with true grief and unfeigned repentance for them, that they may be a continual sorrow and heart-smart unto us; so as nothing may grieve us more than this, that we have offended thee, being
our

Evening Prayer.

our special friend and Father : give us therefore (dear Father) every day more and more sight and feeling of our sins, with true humiliation under the same. Give us also that true and lively Faith, whereby we may lay sure hold on thy Son Christ and all his merits, applying the same to our own souls; so as we may stand fully persuaded, that whatsoever he hath done upon the Cro's, he hath done for us particularly, as well as for others. Give us faith (good Father) constantly to believe all the sweet promises of the Gospel, touching remission of sin, and eternal life, made in thy Son Christ. O Lord increase our faith, that we may altogether rest upon thy promises, which are Yea and Amen. Yea, that we may settle our selves and all that we have wholly upon them; both our souls, bodies, goods, names, wives, children, and our whole estate : knowing that all things depend upon thy promises, power and providence, and that thy Word doth support and bear up the whole order of nature. Moreover, we entreat thee (O Lord) to strengthen us from above, to walk in every good way; & to bring forth the fruits of true Faith in all our particular actions, studying to please thee in all things, and to be fruitful in good works; that we may shew forth unto all men by our good conversation whose children we are : and that we may adorn and beautify our most holy profession, by walking in a Christian course, and in all the sound fruits & practise of godliness and true Religion. To this end we pray thee sanctify our hearts by thy Spirit yet more & more; sanctify our souls and bodies and all our corrupt natural faculties, as reason, understanding, will and affections, so as they may be fitted for thy worship and service; taking a delight and pleasure therein. Stir us up to use prayer, watchfulness, reading, meditation in thy Law, and all other good means whereby we may profit in grace & goodness from day to day. Bless us in the use of the means, that we may daily dye to sin, and live to righteousness: draw us yet nearer unto thee. help us against our manifold wants. Amend our great imperfections; renew us inwardly more and more repair the ruins of our hearts; aid us against the remnants of sin. En-

Evening Prayer.

Direct our hearts to run the way of thy Commandments, direct all our steps in thy word, let none iniquity have dominion over us. Assist us against our special infirmities & master sins, that we may get the victory over them all, to thy glory, and the great peace and comfort of our own consciences. Strengthen us (good Father) by thy grace and holy Spirit, against the common corruptions of the world; as pride, whoredom, covetousness, contempt of the Gospel; swearing, lying, dissimbling, and deceiving. O dear Father, let us not be overcome of these filthy vices; nor any other sinful pleasures & fond delights, wherein thousands are carried headlong to destruction. Arm our souls against the temptations of this world, the flesh and the Devil, that we may overcome them all through thy help, and keep on the right way to life, that we may live in thy fear, and dye in thy favor; that our last may be our best days; and that we may end in great peace of conscience.

Furthermore (dear Father) we entreat thee not only for our selves, but for all our good Brethren, thy dear children, scattered over the face of the whole earth, most humbly beseeching to bless them all; to cheer them up, and gladden them with the joy of thy countenance, both now and always. Guide them all in thy fear, and keep them from evil, that they may praise thy Name. In these dangerous days, & declining times, we pray thee (O Lord) raise up nursing Fathers & nursing Mothers unto thy Church. Raise up also faithful Pastors, that thy Cause may be carried forward. truth may prevail, Religion may prosper; thy Name only may be set up in the earth; thy Son's Kingdom advanced, and thy will accomplished. Set thy self against all adversary power, especially that of Rome; Antichrist, Idolatry & Atheism; curse and cross all their councils, frustrate their devices, scatter their Forces, overthrow their Armies. When they are most wise, let them be most foolish; when they are most strong, let them be most weak. Let them know that there is no wisdom nor counsel, nor secret policy against thee the Lord of Hosts. Let them know that Israel hath a God, & that thou which are called Jehovah,

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hovah, art the only Ruler over all the world. Arise therefore (O most mighty God) and maintain thine own cause against thine enemies, smite through all their loins, & bow down all their backs; yea, let them all be confounded & turned backward that bear ill will unto Sion. Let the patient abiding of the Righteous be joy, and let the wicked be disappointed of their hope. But of all favor, we intreat thee (O Lord) to shew special mercy to thy Church in this Land wherein we live. Continue thy Gospel among us yet with greater success, purge thy house daily more and more, take away all things that offend. Let this Nation still be a place where thy Name may be called upon, and an harbor for thy Saints. Shew mercy to our posterity (dear Father) & have care on them, that thy Gospel may be left unto them as a most holy inheritance. Defend us against foreign invasion, keep out Idolatry & Popery from amongst us. Turn from us those Plagues which our sins cry for. For the sins of this Land are exceeding great, horrible and outrageous; and give thee just cause to make us spectacles of thy vengeance to all Nations; that by how much the more thou hast lifted us up in great mercy & long peace; by so much the more thou shouldst press us down in great wrath and long war. Therefore (dear Father) we most humbly intreat thee, for thy great Names sake, for thy infinite mercys sake, that thou wouldst be reconciled to this Land, and discharge it of all the horrible sins thereof. Drown them (O Lord) in thy infinite mercy through Christ, as it were in a bottomless Gulph; that they may never rise up in judgment against us. For although our sins be exceeding many and fearful, yet thy mercy is far greater; For thou art infinite in mercy, but we cannot be infinite in sinning. Give us not over into the hands of the Idolaters, lest they should blaspheme thy Name, & say, where is their God in whom they trusted? But rather, dear Father, take us into thine own hands, and correct us according to thy wisdom, for with thee is mercy and deep compassion. Moreover, we most heartily beseech thy good Majesty to bless all that are in authority over us, counsel them from above, let them take advice of thee in all things, that they may

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For the comfort and relief of such courses as may be most for thy glory, the good of the Church, and peace of this our Commonwealth. Bless the Nobility, and all the Magistrates of the Land, giving them all grace to execute judgment & Justice, and to maintain truth and equity. Bless all the faithful Ministers of thy Gospel, increase the number of them, increase thy gifts in them, and so bless all their labors in their several places and Congregations, that they all may be instruments of thy hand to enlarge thy Sons Kingdom and to win many unto thee. Comfort the comfortless with all needful comforts. Forget none of thine that are now in trouble, but as their afflictions are so let the joys and comforts of thy Spirit be unto them, and so sanctify unto all thine their afflictions and troubles, that they may tend to thy glory, and their own good. Give us thankful hearts for all thy mercies both spiritual & corporal, for thou art very merciful unto us in the things of this life, & infinitely more merciful in the things of a better life. Let us deeply ponder & weigh all thy particular favours towards us, that by the due consideration thereof, our hearts may be gained yet neerer unto thee, & that therefore we may both love and obey thee, because thou art so kind and loving unto us; that even thy love towards us may draw our loves towards thee, and that because mercy is with thee, thou mayest be feared. Grant these things (good Father) & all other needful Graces for our souls or bodies, or any of thine throughout the whole world, for Jesus Christ's sake: In whose Name we further call upon thee, as he hath taught us in his Gospel, saying:

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

A Prayer to be used at any time, by one alone privately.

Lord my God and Heavenly Father, I thy most unworthy child, do here in thy sight freely confess that I am a most sin'ul creature; and damnable for fear of all thy holy Laws and Commandments: For I was born and bred in sin, and stained in the womb,

A private Prayer.

womb, so have I continually brought forth the vile
& ugly fruits of that infection and contagion, wherein
I was first conceived both in thoughts, words & works.
If I should go about to reckon up my particular offen-
ces, I know not where to begin, or where to make an
end. For they are more then the hairs of my head; yea,
far more then I can possibly feel or know. For who
knoweth the height and depth of his corruption? who
knoweth how oft he offendeth? Thou only, O Lord,
knowest my sins, who knowest my heart; nothing is hid
from thee: thou knowest what I have been, and what I
am, yea, my conscience doth accuse me of many and
grievous evils, and I do daily feel by woful experience
how frail I am, how prone to evil, and how untoward
unto all goodness. My mind is full of vanity, my heart
full of profaneness, mine affections full of deadness, dul-
ness, drowsiness in matters of thy worship and service.
Yea, my whole soul is full of spiritual blindness, hard-
ness, unprofitableness, coldness and security. And in
very deed, I am altogether a lump of sin, and a mass of
all misery, and therefore I have forfeited thy favor, in-
curred thy high displeasure, and have given thee just
cause to frown upon me, to give me over, & leave me to
mine own corrupt will and affections. But (O my dear
Father) I have learned from thy mouth, that thou art a
God full of mercy, slow to wrath, of great compassion
and kindness towards all such as groan under the bur-
then of their sins. Therefore extend thy great mercy to-
wards me poor sinner, & give me a general pardon for
all mine offences whatsoever: seal it in the blood of thy
Son, and seal it to my conscience by thy spirit, assuring
me more and more of thy love and favor towards me,
and that thou art a reconciled Father unto me. Grant
that I may all time to come love thee much, because
much is given, & of very love fear thee, & obey thee. O
Lord, increase my faith, that I may steadfastly believe all
the promises of the Gospel made in thy Son Christ,

... me to bring forth
 ... repentance in all my part-
 ... my soul full of joy & peace in believ-
 ... of inward comfort, & spiritual strength
 ... me yet a greater feeling of
 ... mercies toward me; work in my
 ... thy Majesty, a zeal of thy Glory, and ha-
 ... of all evil, & a desire of all good things. Give me
 ... those sins which thou knowest are strong-
 ... me. Let me once at last make a conquest of the
 ... Mortality in me whatsoever is carnal:
 ... me throughout by thy Spirit: knit my heart to
 ... that I may fear thy Name: renew in me
 ... Image of thy Christ, daily more & more. Give me
 ... in the reading & meditating of thy Word. Let
 ... the publick Ministry thereof. Let me love
 ... reverence all the faithful Ministers of thy Gospel.
 ... seal them in
 ... write them to my heart, give me a soft & mel-
 ... I may tremble at thy words, and be al-
 ... much affected with godly Sermons. Let not my
 ... thy mercies from me, nor mine unwor-
 ... stop the passage of thy grace. Open mine eyes
 ... the great wonders of thy Law. Grant these Pe-
 ... merciful God, not only to me, but to all
 ... children throughout the whole world, for Je-
 ... Christ's sake: in whose name I do further call up-
 ... he hath taught me, *Our Father*
 ... in Heaven, &c.

F I N I S.

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